JONATHAN SWIFT

GULLIVER'S TRAVELS



Masterpiece

Critical Study

JONATHAN SWIFT
GULLIVER'S TRAVELS

Revised and Enlarged Edition

by

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Price Rs. 54.00

NEW KITAB MAHAL
URDU BAZAR, LAHORE. PH. 66550
Printed at: Alico Printers, Lahore

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Jonathan Swift : A Short Biographical Sketch

Birth and education in Ireland. Jonathan Swift came of an English family which had settled in Dublin (in Ireland). He was born in Dublin on the 30th November, 1667. When he was just three years old, his mother returned to her relatives in England, leaving him in the care of an uncle. The boy was sent to Kilkenny School where he made the acquaintance of Congreve. At the age of fourteen, he was sent to Trinity College, Dublin. Why he afterwards felt so much resentment against his relatives is not known ; for his uncle gave him not "the education of a dog" but the best education available in Ireland. At college, Swift was often at war with the authorities, and he was not of a very studious turn of mind ; but he succeeded in getting his degree (in 1685).

Employment under Sir William Temple. Swift's uncle died in 1688, and Swift was now left to rely on his own efforts and exertions. He joined his mother at Leicester (in England) and looked about for employment. After a time, an opportunity came from Sir William Temple who was then living in retirement at Moor Park, near Farnham. Temple's father had been a friend of Swift's uncle ; and Lady Temple was related to Swift's mother. Temple, a man of culture and refinement, and a renowned diplomat, was in need of some one to help him in his literary work, and he entrusted Swift with the job. Swift was at this time an untrained young man of twentytwo. No wonder that Temple treated him entirely as a dependant. In later years, Swift spoke somewhat disparagingly of Temple, saying that he had been treated by that great man as a mere school-boy. Temple sometimes seemed out of humour for three or four days continuously, and Swift was only too ready to construe every passing mood of his patron as an indignity to him.

A modest position as a priest. Temple seems to have done all he could for the young Swift, but he was unable to secure for him any definite position, beyond obtaining for him the prebend* of Kilroot,

* Prebend means a position in a church which entitles the holder to a stipend.

near Belfast, in Ireland, shortly after he had taken holy orders* in 1694. Swift stayed in that position for about two years and, feeling tired of Ireland, returned to Temple at Moor Park in 1696.

His first love-affair. At this time Swift also had his first love-affair. The woman was a certain Miss Jane Waring whom he addressed as "Varina". He proposed to her by letter in 1696, but received no definite reply from her. However, he kept corresponding with her till 1700 when a final letter by him ended the matter between them.

Experience under Temple's patronage. Under Temple's patronage, Swift had opportunities of studying both men and books that served him in good stead at a later time. Swift was learning much in several directions while serving Temple as his secretary. He read classical and historical works in Temple's library ; and he heard of public affairs and of the experiences of his patron.

As a tutor to Esther. During this period he also acted as a tutor to Esther Johnson who was a child of eight when Swift had first met her. Esther was a dependant of Temple's and had now grown up to be a beautiful girl.** She was the woman to whom Swift gave the name "Stella", and who was destined to play a big part in Swift's emotional life.

Early writings. Lady Temple had died in 1694, and Temple himself passed away in 1699. While Temple left a legacy for Esther, he appointed Swift merely to be his literary executor. Up to this time Swift had published no work of his own though he had been writing a good deal on various subjects. He had written *The Battle of the Books* in 1697 ; but it did not appear till 1704 when it was published with *A Tale of a Tub*.

As Lord Berkeley's secretary and chaplain.† In the year following Temple's death, Swift returned to Ireland with Lord Berkeley as his secretary and chaplain. In addition to this, Swift was also appointed to a group of small livings‡ near Dublin which added to his income. Lady Berkeley had a poius love of sermons, and she commissioned Swift to read out to her the discourses of Boyle. On one occasion, he played a practical joke upon Lady Berkeley by reading out to her his *Meditation on a Broomstick* (which he had himself written), giving her the impression that it was a sermon by Boyle.

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* "To take holy orders" means to become a clergyman. When one takes holy orders, he becomes a professional clergyman.

**This girl was actually Temple's illegitimate daughter.

† A chaplain is a clergyman attached to a great man or some institution in a personal capacity.

‡A "living" is in this context a benefice, that is, property attached to a church and bringing an income to the man to whom it has been assigned.

Writing for the Whigs. Returning to England with Lord Berkeley in 1701, Swift was soon in the midst of a political crisis, throwing all his energies into the Whig cause and writing on their behalf his pamphlet *On the Dissensions in Athens and Rome* even though, as a churchman, his sympathies were on the whole more in accordance with the policy of the Tory party. However, as he received no encouragement from either of the parties, he gave up politics for the time being, and in disgust went back to Ireland in 1709.

The "Journal to Stella", and the pamphlets on behalf of the Tories. In 1711, Swift was again in London, and the events of the three following years, with all Swift's thoughts and hopes, are recorded in his letters to Esther Johnson and her companion, Mrs. Dingley. These letters were afterwards to be published as the *Journal to Stella.* He now joined the Tories, the side with which he was genuinely in sympathy. The interests of the church were paramount with him; and he had realized that the Tories were the church's natural guardians. He produced a good deal of propaganda on behalf of the Tories. Among the pamphlets that he published during this period were two in favour of peace. One of these, entitled *The Conduct of the Allies,* was sold out in a few hours.

The Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral; and ill health. Swift had now attained a position of great importance, and the authority he possessed and the respect he received were a source of much gratification to him. However, his worldly position and his income had not improved much. It was only in April, 1713 that a sign of official recognition came to him with his appointment as the Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. Indeed, this was the first official recognition of his political work, though it was not so great a reward as it appeared, especially because it meant what he regarded as his banishment to Ireland. His health was not so good at this time; he had become subject to frequent attacks of giddiness; and even the reception he got in Dublin was not very friendly.

Esther and Hester (or, Stella and Vanessa). In Dublin, Swift was in regular contact with Esther Johnson who too had now settled there, but his relations with her were complicated by his friendship for another girl, Hester Vanhomrigh, the daughter of a widow, with whom he had become acquainted in 1708. This girl, to whom Swift gave the name "Vanessa", was an intellectual and accomplished girl whose love for him proved to be the tragedy of her life. Swift's anger at a letter she had written to Stella brought their friendship of fifteen years to an abrupt end, and caused her death from grief and jealousy in 1723.

The feeling of loneliness in Dublin. Swift felt acutely the change from the rush of politics and congenial companionship in London to the loneliness and comparative obscurity of his life in Dublin. "The

best and greatest part of my life I spent in England ; there I made my friendships and there I left my desires", he wrote about this period in his life. In London he had formed friendships with most of the famous men of letters like Alexander Pope and Dr. Arbuthnot.

As an Irish patriot : the "Drapier Letters". Ireland was at this time in the throes of famine and crime, as a result of the passing of a law restricting trade with the colonies and forbidding the export of woollen manufacturers. Swift's sense of justice revolted against this, and in 1720 he wrote the *Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufactures* wherein he appealed to every Irish citizen to form an earnest resolve never to appear with one single shred that came from England. Four years later appeared the famous *Drapier Letters* which were published anonymously. These letters were occasioned by the grant of a patent to a man called William Wood, authorizing him to mint copper coins for Ireland. The English government was compelled, by the force of the propaganda in *Drapier Letters* against the grant of this patent, to cancel the contract. When the identity of the author of these letters became known, Swift became the hero of Ireland. In spite of his original scorn for this country, Swift had become a genuine Irish patriot.

No preferment* for Swift. There was some hope now that he would obtain preferment in England, but none came. In Ireland too there was disappointment for him because he found that the people did not do much to help themselves. His growing misanthropy found expression in a terrible satire in the pamphlet called *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burden to their Parents or the Country*. However, in spite of his bitterness, he did his work as the Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral efficiently and improved the lot of many by his charity. To Mrs. Dingley he gave an annuity of fifty guineas a year, allowing her to believe that the money came from a fund of which he was the trustee.

Bereavement ; deafness ; brain trouble ; insanity ; death. In 1738 he wrote to Edward Harley, Earl of Oxford : "I am now good for nothing, very deaf, very old, and very much out of favour with those in power. My dear Lord, I have a thousand things to say, but I can remember none of them." The loss of his friend Sheridan in 1738, and the gradual passing away of all those great minds with whom he had been so familiar, made his last years more and more lonely and helpless. In 1740 he wrote to a cousin : "I have been very miserable all night, and today extremely deaf and full of pain. I hardly understand one word I write. I am sure my days will be very few, few and miserable they must be." The brain trouble which had threatened him all his life became worse, and there came violent fits of temper with considerable physical pain. By 1742, his mental

* *i.e.*, promotion or advancement or a higher office in the Church.

condition had become so bad that it was clear that he had lost his sanity. It became necessary to appoint guardians for him, because he had fallen into a condition of dementia. The end came, at last, on the 7th October, 1745. He left his fortune to establish a hospital for idiots and lunatics. He was buried in his own Cathedral of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and he lies by the side of Stella who had died in 1728 and had been buried there.

The contradictions in his nature, a result of some mental defect. Various interpretations of Swift's life and work have been offered. Macaulay, Jeffrey, and Thackeray produced unsympathetic studies of Swift. But much has been written in his defence since then ; and he still remains somewhat of a mystery. It is not easy to reconcile his contempt for mankind with his affection for his friends and their affection for him. Similarly it is not easy to reconcile his attacks on womenkind with his love for one woman,* and the love which two** other women felt for him. Again, it is difficult to explain the offensiveness of some of his writings in the light of the decorum of his own life and his real sense of religion. Probably these contradictions were due to a distorted imagination, or the result of some physical or mental defect. At the same time, it may be pointed out that it is very occasionally that any coarseness appears in his work. There is no lewdness in his work, and no persistent strain of indecency as there is in Sterne, for instance.

A disappointed, frustrated, and embittered man. Some have suggested that Swift's avoidance of the common ties of human life was due to his fears of approaching madness. Others find the explanation in his physical infirmities. Others, again, have found the answer in his coldness of temperament or in his strong desire for independence. He appears to have hungered for human sympathy, but to have wanted nothing more. From the passion of love, he seems to have turned away with disgust. The early years of poverty and dependence left a permanent mark on him, and he became a disappointed and embittered man. His mind, possessed by a spirit of scorn, turned in upon itself, and his egotism grew with advancing years. Cursed with excessive pride and arrogance, he became like a suppressed volcano. His keenness of vision caused him to see with painful clearness all that was contemptible and degrading in his fellow-men, but he had little appreciation for what was good and great in them. The pains and giddiness to which he was subject left their impression upon his work. "At best", he said, "I have an ill head, and an aching heart". His misanthropy was really a disease, and his life of loneliness and disappointment was a tragedy calling for pity and awe, rather than for blame.

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* namely, Esther Johnson or Stella, Sir William Temple's illegitimate daughter.

** namely, Miss Jane Waring or Varina, and Hester Vanhomrigh or Vanessa.

A summing-up. Although the facts of Swift's life are fairly clear (with the exception of his relationship with Stella), his complex temperament and personality tend to elude and sometimes repel readers. In religion and politics he was a conservative, a believer in the authority of the Church and the State. He thought that the general and traditional wisdom embodied in these institutions corrected the inherent prejudices of the individual mind. But he realized that institutions might themselves be corrupted, and he had no illusions about the specific kings, ministers, and bishops who directed them. He believed in common sense rather than in systems or in abstract reasoning: he disliked anything theoretical in approach, including metaphysics and what we now call science, as irrelevant to man's central moral concerns. At the same time, common sense led him to distrust "enthusiasm", the contemporary term for any kind of fanatical or highly emotional attitude.

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The Principal Works of Swift

NOTE: The dates given within brackets are the dates of publication.

I. **Major Satirical Works :**

A Tale of a Tub (1704)
The Battle of the Books (1704)
Gulliver's Travels (1726)

II. **Correspondence**

Journal to Stella (1766-1768*)

III. **Pamphlets and Articles on English Politics**

A Discourse of the Contents and Dissensions between the Nobles and the Commons in Athens and Rome (1701)

The Conduct of the Allies and of the Late Ministry in Beginning and Carrying on the Present War (1711)

Some Remarks on the Barrier Treaty (1712)

A Short Character of Thomas Earl of Wharton (1711)

Some Advice Humbly Offered to the Members of the October Club (1712)

IV. **Pamphlets on Church Questions**

An Argument Against Abolishing Christianity (1708)

The Sentiments of a Church of England Man with respect to Religion and Government (1708)

A Project for the Advancement of Religion and the Reformation of Manners (1709)

*Published posthumously

A Letter to a Young Gentleman, Lately Entered into Holy Orders (1721)

V. Pamphlets Relating to Ireland

A Proposal for the Universal Use of Irish Manufacture (1720)

Drapier's Letters (1722)

A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burden to their Parents or the Country and for Making them Beneficial to the Public (1729)

An Examination of Certain Abuses, Corruptions, and Enormities in the City of Dublin (1732)

VI. Poems (1709-1736)

Baucis and Philemon
On Mrs Biddy Floyd
A Description of a City Shower
A Description of the Morning
The Grand Question Debated
Cadenus and Vanessa
The Progress of Beauty
The Progress of Marriage
The Journal of a Modern Lady
The Lady's Dressing Room
Strephon and Chloe
Epistle to Mr. Gay
The Legion Club
The Beast's Confession to the Priest
On Poetry : A Rhapsody
On the Death of Dr. Swift

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A Brief Examination of Swift's Best-Known Works

1. "THE BATTLE OF THE BOOKS" (1704)

The dispute between the ancients and the moderns. *The Battle of the Books* had its origin in the controversy regarding the relative superiority of ancient and modern learning, in which Sir William Temple had taken part. The controversy has now lost its interest but the merit of the work lies in its satirical power. The satire is certainly an attack on pedantry, in which it is argued that invention may be weakened by excessive learning. There were two tops to the hill Parnassus, the highest and largest of which had been from time immemorial in the posssession of the ancients, while the other was held by the moderns. The moderns desired to bring about a reduction in the height of the position held by the ancients. The ancients replied that the better course would for the moderns to raise their own side of the hill. To such a step, the ancients would not only agree but would largely contribute. However, the negotiations between the two sides came to nothing, and there was a great battle. But, first, we are told the story of the bee and the spider.

The story of the bee and the spider. A bee had become entangled in a spider's web. The two insects quarrelled, and Aesop was summoned for arbitration. The bee, who is to be regarded as symbolizing the ancients, went straight to nature, gathering its support from the flowers of the field and the garden, without doing any damage to them. The spider, who symbolizes the moderns, boasted of not being obliged to any other creature but of drawing and spinning out all from himself. Thus Swift seems to be saying that the moderns had produced nothing but wrangling and satire, partaking of the nature of the spider's poison. The ancients ranging through every corner of nature had, on the other hand, produced honey and wax and furnished mankind with "the two noblest of things, which are sweetness and light".

The issue left undecided. In the great battle between the books that follows, the moderns appeal for help to the malignant

deity called Criticism who had dwelt in a den at the top of snowy mountains where there were spoils of numberless half-devoured volumes. With her were Ignorance, Pride, Opinion, Noise and Impudence, Dullness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-manners. She (that is, the deity called Criticism) could change herself "into an octavo compass", when she was indistinguishable in shape and dress from "the divine Bentley", the most deformed of all the moderns. The story ends abruptly with the meeting of Bentley and Wotton with Boyle who transfixes the pair with his lance. The issue of the battle is left undecided. Nor should we imagine that Swift held too seriously the views on the subject of the controversy expressed in this fragment. The piece was largly inspired by Swift's desire to assist his patron (Sir William Temple) ; but, besides being a brilliant attack on his opponents, it abounds in satire of a more general nature.

2. "A TALE OF A TUB" (1704)

I

The story of three brothers representing three sects of Christianity. *A Tale of a Tub* was written in 1696 but published with *The Battle of the Books* in 1704. A considerable portion of this work is occupied by an account of the quarrels of the churches, told in the story of three brothers, Peter, Martin, and Jack who represent the Roman Catholics, the Anglicans and the Puritans respectively, of the coat bequeathed to them by their father whose will, explaining the proper mode of wearing it, they first interpreted each in his own way and then after many ingenious evasions of it, locked up in a strong box ; and of their subsequent quarrels concerning the will and its significance. Throughout, the brothers act in accordance with the doctrine that beings which the world calls "clothes" are, in reality, rational creatures or men, and that, in short, we see nothing but the clothes and hear nothing but them.

Swift's defence of himself against an accusation. The manner in which Swift deals with religious questions in this book led to suspicions as to the genuineness of his Christianity—a suggestion which Swift regarded as a great wrong to him. He said that he had attacked only Peter (who insisted, in turn, being called "Mr. Peter", "Father Peter", and "Lord Peter") and Jack (who gave the name of zeal to his hatred of Peter, and was much annoyed by Martin's patience), and that he had not made any reflections on Martin. What he satirized was not religion but the abuse of religion. This defence of himself by Swift is not very convincing. Although we need not doubt Swift's orthodoxy, we cannot help feeling that a sceptic would read this book with greater pleasure than a believer. The contempt poured on Roman Catholics and dissenters is often in very bad taste, and touches upon doctrines and beliefs which an earnest member of the Church of England would think it dangerous to ridicule. Such attacks on important doctrines may easily be treated as attacks on Christianity itself.

Entertaining digressions in the book. But *A Tale of a Tub* is far more than an account of the wrangles of the churches. It is also a skilful and merciless dissection of the whole of human nature. In addition to the satire on vanity and pride, on pedantry and on the quest for fame in the introductory dedication to Somers and the dedication to Prince Posterity, there is an attack on bad writing which is continued, again and again, throughout the book. In conclusion, Swift observed that he was trying an experiment very frequent among modern authors, which was to write upon nothing. The work contains entertaining digressions, in one of which the author satirizes critics. In former times, it had been held that critics were persons who framed rules by which careful writers might judge the productions of the learned and form a sound estimate of the sublime and the contemptible. At other times, a "critic" had meant the restorer of ancient learning from the dust of manuscripts. But the third and noblest sort was the "true critic" who had bestowed many benefits on the world. A true critic was the discoverer and collector of the faults of writers. The custom of authors was to point out with great pains their own excellences and other men's defects. The modern way of using books was either to learn their titles and then boast of acquaintance with them, or to get a thorough insight into the indexes. To enter the palace of learning at the great gate took much time. Therefore, men with little time and little ceremony use the back door. In another digression Swift treats of the origin, use, and importance of madness in a commonwealth. He defines happiness as "a perpetual possession of being well deceived". The serene and peaceful state is to be a fool among knaves. Delusion is necessary for peace of mind. Elsewhere, Swift confesses to a longing for fame, a blessing which usually comes only after death.

The other merits of the book. In wit and brilliancy of thought, Swift never surpassed *A Tale of a Tub*; and the style is as nearly perfect as it could well be. Swift here allows himself more colour than is to be found in his later writings. In spite of discursiveness and lack of dramatic interest, the book remains the greatest of English satires.

II

Religion made to look ludicrous. *A Tale of a Tub* relates the story of three sons, Peter, Martin, and Jack, representing respectively the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, and the Protestant dissenters who have each been left by their father the legacy of a coat with specific instructions as to how to wear and look after it. The author then proceeds to give an ironic history of the development of Christianity by means of accounts of the various ways in which each brother behaves with respect to his coat and also in other matters. The device of translating developments in theology and in ritual into a parody of the purely physical accompaniments of such things struck deeper than Swift

intended because once religion is discussed in such ludicrous terms it is impossible to restrict the destructive satire to the abuses of what Swift considered Popish superstition on the one hand and dissenting fanaticism on the other : religion itself becomes ludicrous, and equated with its most external and trivial trimmings. So long as Swift keeps to abuses, such as the deliberate addition by the brothers of ornaments, expressly forbidden in their father's will, the satire is specific and limited. But even in these cases, Swift by his tone reduces all religious belief to something arbitrary and trivial. It was all very well for him to protest in the "Apology" which he prefixed to this book : "Why should any clergyman of our church be angry to see the follies of fanaticism and superstition exposed, though in the most ridiculous manner ; since that is perhaps the most probable way to cure them, or at least to hinder them from further spreading ?" If differences in the interpretation of Christianity are reduced to this level, then Christianity itself is reduced.

The weakness in Swift's argument. The satire in *A Tale of a Tub* is often ingenious and brilliant, but only a sceptic or agnostic could fully relish all of it. One of Swift's favourite satiric devices is to insist that there is no difference between the sign or symbol of a thing and the thing itself. Thus he writes :

> 'Tis true, indeed, that these animals, which are vulgarly called suits of clothes, or dresses, do, according to certain compositions, receive different appelations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain and a red gown, and a white rod, and a great horse, it is called a Lord-Mayor ; if certain ermines and furs be placed in a certain position, we style them a Judge ; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a Bishop.

This is certainly an effective way of puncturing human pride (and human pride was always one of Swift's main targets) ; but if one insists that there is no reality at all behind any of the symbols and rituals employed by human beings, the implication cannot be confined to a satire of bad beliefs or practices or defective institutions or of anything less than the total nature of man. Swift spoke in the name of reason against pride and fanaticism ; at the same time he was a stout supporter of the Church of England and opposed a too tolerant treatment of dissenters. But exactly the same tools with which he destroyed the position of those with whom he disagreed could have been, and indeed were, used by him against his own. Pure unalloyed reason could not have justified the Anglican position as the only tenable Christian position for an Englishman. It is Peter and Jack who are attacked in *A Tale of a Tub* ; but Martin is really equally vulnerable.

Brilliant digressions. Some of the most brilliant parts of *A Tale of a Tub* are the digressions in which Swift carried on his war.

against the pride and emptiness of modern scholars and the wicked folly of "religious enthusiasm". The digressions concerning the origin, the use, and importance of madness in a commonwealth is particularly revealing. Madness is humorously attributed to the rising of certain vapours from lower parts of the body into the brain. It is this kind of madness which has been responsible for "the greatest actions that have been performed in the world, under the influence of single men, which are the establishment of new empires by conquest, the advance and progress of new schemes in philosophy, and the contriving as well as the propagating of new religions". The collection of vapours in the brain disturbs human reason, and then fancy takes control and common sense is turned out.

Delusion and reality. "Cant and vision", Swift goes on to say, "are to the ear and eye the same that tickling is to the touch". It is a significant collocation. The entertainments and pleasures which men value most in life "are such as dupe and play the wag with the senses". Proof of this is found in the fact that "happiness is a perpetual possession of being well deceived". Delusion is stronger than things as they appear "in the glass of nature". Credulity is better than curiosity, and superficial acceptance of the surface of things better than "that pretended philosophy which enters into the depth of things and then comes gravely back with information and discoveries, that in the inside they are good for nothing".

A satire on those who are content with the surface of things. Swift ironically informs us that we should be content with what we can know by sight and touch only, and ignore reason which comes "officiously with tools or cutting, and opening, and mangling, and piercing, offering to demonstrate that they are not of the same consistence quite through". Let us therefore be content with the outside. "Last week I saw a woman flayed, and you will hardly believe how much it altered her person for the worse." Swift is here attacking the human tendency to be deceived by the surface of things, by mere clothes and decorations. His method is to suggest that this is wholly desirable, for the use of reason to go below the surface may reveal unpleasant things: "Yesterday I ordered the carcass of a beau to be stripped in my presence, when we were all amazed to find so many unsuspected faults under one suit of clothes. Then I laid open his brain, his heart, and his spleen; but I plainly perceived at every operation that the farther we proceeded, we found the defects increase upon us in number and bulk; from all which, I justly formed this conclusion to myself that whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to solder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature, will deserve much better of mankind and teach us a more useful science than so much in present esteem, of widening and exposing them." The man who is content to enjoy the surface of things gets the cream of nature, leaving the sour elements and the dregs for philosophy and

reason to drink.* This is the sublime point of felicity "called the possession of being well deceived ; the serene peaceful state of being a fool among knaves."

Swift's dilemma, the dilemma of the Age of Reason. This is certainly brilliant satire of a savage kind. But Swift's contrast between the happily deceived fool who is content to know the surface of things and the rational man who uses his reason to inquire what lies below the surface has already been weakened by the earlier contrast between reason on the one hand and imagination, vision, enthusiasm, and fancy on the other. The reason that is perpetually suspicious of imagination is surely prevented from going very far below the superficial surface of things. Swift was irritated by his fellow-men because he believed in reason. He believed that man was, if not a rational creature in all his doings, at least *rationis capax* (capable of reason), and it was therefore all the more tragic that man should allow his fancy to get the better of his reason. This attitude ultimately reduces the sphere of reason to something so narrow that it is incapable of really achieving anything. The exaltation of reason easily turns into anti-intellectualism which finds its fullest expression in *Gulliver's Travels*. In that book, the Brobdingnagians are obliquely praised for knowing only morality, history, poetry, and mathematics and being incapable of apprehending the least notion of "ideas, entities, abstractions and transcendentals", while the noble Houyhnhnms cannot believe that a member of their species can take any pleasure in Gulliver's company (though it is an undeniable fact that one of them does) because "such a practice was not agreeable to reason or nature, or a thing ever heard of before among them". Indeed, there is an inescapable dilemma in the thinking of Swift and his time. If belief in reason and nature means a belief in the common sense of mankind, then what the common sense of mankind believes is reasonable and natural and true. Anything new must be wrong. But most men are fools and knaves, according to Swift, and so the common sense of mankind, which he also believed in as an ultimate criterion, in fact leads to folly and knavery. Again, reason teaches us to be suspicious of imagination, of vision, of enthusiasm ; we must therefore stick to those simple rational truths that the calm application of common sense discovers. At the same time we must go below the surface and not be deceived by the mere appearance of things. Sometimes reason seems to lead to a simple empiricism : we must allow no knowledge that we cannot immediately test by our own experience. At other times a simple empiricism leads to delusion, for things are not as they seem and we must probe deeper to get at reality. We must beware of all abstractions, generalizations, and transcendental ideas ; yet this advice is given in the name of "reason and nature" which are themselves abstract general ideas, not to mention Swift's position as a devout member of the Church of

* The irony of this statement is noteworthy.

England whose theology certainly could not deny the transcendental. Brilliant in its play of irony as *A Tale of a Tub* is, it demonstrates some of the intellectual and moral dilemmas of the Age of Reason more clearly than any other piece of writing of that time.

3. "GULLIVER'S TRAVELS" (1726)

The origin of the book and its great popularity. *Gulliver's Travels* is the most famous of all Swift's works. The origin of the book has been traced to the celebrated Scriblerus Club which came into existence in the last months of Queen Anne's reign when Swift joined with Arbuthnot, Pope, Gay, and other members in a scheme to ridicule all false tastes in learning. According to Pope, Swift took the first hints for *Gulliver's Travels* from the *Memoirs of Scriblerus*, but the connection of Swift's book with the original scheme is very slight and appears chiefly in the third part of Gulliver's book. *Gulliver's Travels*, though finished in 1725, was published anonymously at the end of October, 1726, and within a month the book was in everybody's hands.

Satire on current English politics in Part I. In Part I of the book, Gulliver describes his shipwreck in Lilliput where the people are just six inches in height. The Emperor of Lilliput believes himself to be the delight and terror of the universe ; but the whole thing appears absurd to Gulliver who is twelve times as tall as any Lilliputian. In the account of the two parties in the country, distinguished by the use of high heels and low heels, Swift satirizes the English political parties, and the intrigues which centred around the Prince of Wales. Swift also makes fun of religious feuds in his account of the problem which is dividing the people. The problem is : "Should eggs be broken at the big end or the little end ?" This part is full of references to current English politics, but the satire is free from bitterness.

The scornful comments of the Brobdingnagian King in Part II. In Part II, containing an account of the voyage to Brobdingnag, Swift's contempt for mankind is emphasized. Gulliver now finds himself a dwarf among people who are sixty feet in height. The King, who regards Europe as if it were an ant-hill, says ; "How contemptible a thing was human grandeur which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects" as Gulliver ; and Gulliver himself, after living among a great race distinguished for calmness and common sense, could not but feel tempted to laugh at the strutting and bowing of English lords and ladies as much as the King laughed at him. The King could not understand the meaning of the "secrets of State", because he believed that the government of a country should be run according to principles of common sense, reason, justice, and lenity. Finally, the King observes : "I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth". But Gulliver points out to the reader that

allowances must be made for a King living apart from the rest of the world.

Satire on theoretical intellectuals in Part III. Part III of the book is a satire chiefly on philosophers, projectors, and inventors, men who live in the air, divorced from the realities of life. If it be objected that these attacks on the learned people were unfair, it must be remembered that England had recently gone through the experience of the South Sea Bubble, when no project was too absurd to be brought before the public. Unfortunately, Swift does not properly distinguish between pretenders to learning and those who were genuinely entitled to respect. In the Island of Sorcerers, Gulliver is able to summon famous men of ancient times and question them, with the result that he finds the world to have been misled by prostitute writers to attribute the greatest exploits in war to cowards, the wisest counsels to fools, sincerity to flatterers, piety to atheists. Gulliver sees, too, by looking at an old yeoman, how the race had gradually deteriorated through vice and corruption. In another country called Luggnagg, Gulliver finds that the race of Struldbrugs or immortals, so far from being happy, is the most miserable of all, condemned to endure an endless dotage.

Satire on mankind in general in Part IV. In Part IV of the book, the voyage to the country of Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos, Swift's satire is of the bitterest. Gulliver is now in a country where the horses are possessed of reason and are the governing class, while the Yahoos, though having the shape of human beings, are brutal beasts, without reason and without conscience. In trying to convince the Houyhnhnms that he is not a Yahoo, Gulliver is made to show how little removed a man is from the brute. Gulliver's account of wars among human beings produces only disgust in the master Houyhnhnm. The satire on law and lawyers, and on the lust for gold is emphasized by praise of the virtues of the Houyhnhnms and of their learning. The Houyhnhnms are governed only by reason ; and love and courtship are unknown to them. Gulliver does not wish to leave this country for whose rulers he has developed the greatest respect. When he does return home after leaving this country, his family fills him with such disgust that he swoons when his wife embraces and kisses him. But what annoys him most is to see human beings filled with pride, a vice wholly unknown to the Houyhnhnms.

The misanthropic tendency of Swift. The satire in Part IV is, indeed, terrible and fierce. All that can be said in reply to those who condemn Swift for writing it is that it was the result of disappointment, wounded pride, growing ill-health, and sorrow caused by the sickness of Stella whom he loved best in the world. However, it is wrong to say that the denunciation of the human race in Part IV is baseless and unconvincing. It is true that Swift give us a one-sided picture of the human race, and that there is some exaggeration in this portrayal. But there is a sound basis for the

denunciation. Swift certainly shows himself to be a cynic or a misanthrope, but those with any prolonged observation of the behaviour of human beings and a close contact with them will agree that there is more of evil and wickedness in human nature than goodness.

4. "JOURNAL TO STELLA" (1766, 1768)*

A record of events and its allusions to persons. Of Swift's correspondence, by far the most interesting is that with Esther Johnson. This part of his correspondence subsequently became known as the *Journal to Stella*. These journal-letters were published in 1766 and 1768. The *Journal to Stella* affords the most intimate picture of Swift that is available to the reader, while at the same time it is a historical document of the greatest value. It throws much light on the relations between Swift and Esther, and it brings vividly before us Swift's fears and hopes during the two years and a half (1710-1713) covered by the letters. His style, always simple and straightforward, is never more so than in this most intimate correspondence. He mentions casually the detailed incidents of his life and alludes to the people he met. He never describes any one at length, but constantly sums up in a sentence the main characteristics of the man or, at least, his estimate of the man's character. Bolingbroke is the "thorough rake"; Oxford is the "pure trifler"; Marlborough is "as covetous as hell and as ambitious as a prince of it"; Congreve "now nearly blind"; "the lovable Arbuthnot"; Steele, "who hardly ever keeps an appointment"; Queen Anne "who finds very little to say to those around her"; Mrs. Masham and other ladies of the court—of all these we are permitted a glance which seems to furnish us with a real knowledge of them.

Miscellaneous information. Day by day, we are told of party intrigues and of promises held out to Swift. "The Tories daily tell me I may make my fortune if I please", he noted in 1710, "but I do not understand them, or rather I do understand them". A few weeks later, he writes:

> "To say the truth, the present ministry have a difficult task and want me. Perhaps they may be as grateful as others; but, according to the best judgment I have, they are pursuing the true interest of the public and therefore I am glad to contribute what is in my power."

Complaints of high expenses. Swift's financial troubles constantly come to light in these letters. "People have so left town", he says, "that I am at a loss for a dinner. It cost me eighteen pence in coach-hire before I could find a place to dine in." When he first went to London, he took rooms at eight shillings a week: "Plaguy dear, but I spend nothing for eating, never go to a tavern, and very seldom in a coach." In another place he says: "This rain

*Published posthumously.

ruins me in coach hire". How much exaggeration there is in these protests against expenditure, it is not easy to say. The *Journal* abounds in arrogant references to great ladies and others, but the arrogance is partly affected and partly the result of a fear of being patronized.

His style. Swift's style almost represents perfection. Clear, pointed, precise, he seems to have had no difficulty in finding words to express exactly the impression which he wishes to convey. His sentences are not always grammatically correct, but they come home to the reader like the words of a great orator or advocate, with convincing force. He realizes so clearly what he describes that the reader becomes necessarily interested and feels impressed. There are no tricks of style, no recurring phrases ; no ornaments, no studied effects ; the object is attained without apparent effort, with an outward gravity masking the underlying satire or cynicism, and an apparent calmness concealing bitter invective. There is never any doubt of his earnestness, whatever may be the mockery on the surface. He had no sympathy for the metaphysical and the speculative.

His merits and deficiencies. Swift was a master satirist, and his irony was deadly. He was the greatest among the writers of his time if we judge them by the standard of sheer power of mind. Yet, with some few exceptions, his works are not now widely read. Order, rule, sobriety—these are the principles he placed before himself when he wrote, and they form the basis of his views on life, politics, and religion. Sincerity is never wanting, though it may be cloaked with humour. But we look in vain for lofty ideals, or for the prophetic touch which has marked the greatest of English writers. That which is spiritual was strangely absent in Swift. He castigates folly and evil ; but he seems to have had no hope for the world. He is too often found scorning the pettiness of his fellow-creatures, as in Lilliput ; or describing with disgust the coarseness of human nature, as in Brobdingnag. Satire and denunciation alone are unsatisfying ; and Swift must therefore take his place lower than the great creative writers.

4

Cazamian on Swift

A latent Romanticism in the greatest writer of the classical age. Swift is the greatest writer of the classical age by the force of his genius. His work owes an exceptionally broad scope to the freedom and penetration of its thought. He carries the rational criticism of values to a point where it threatens and undermines the very reasons for living. Lucidity and the search for balance in his case are therefore suffused with an intellectual emotion, concentrated and intense, which at times cannot be distinguished from an impassioned bitterness, and the expression of which, despite the restraint of irony and humour, possess a pathetic vehemence. Attaining thus to the utmost limits of satire, he leaves the normal, simple plane of a literature of reason ; the stifled, repressed voices of sensibility and instinct, which reality in its baseness and cruelty afflicts with many wounds, supply the subdued accompaniment of soul-stirring chords to the clear accents of the intellect. Beyond the spirit of classicism, of which he is the supreme mouthpiece, one perceives in him the latent powers of a virtual Romanticism ; and further still, the boldly humble solutions of the most modern wisdom.

Swift's demand for truth, destructive of all deceitful illusions. Swift's practical adhesion to moral or social beliefs is to all appearances a sincere act, and one which compels our respect. The moral figure of Swift is that of an eager demand for truth that destroys one by one all deceitful illusions, and of the suffering which accompanies that destruction. This demand has been carried very far in all directions.

His preference for the observance of the golden mean*. As a church dignitary, mixed up in the controversies which separated the Anglicans from the dissenting sects, and within Anglicanism itself set several tendencies at variance with each other, Swift had to take a side. He wrote numerous religious treatises, besides doctrinal sermons, sensible and calm in tone. He acquitted himself scrupulously of the duties of his charge as the Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. He practised his religion with more hidden

*"The golden mean" is a phrase which means the middle path and an avoidance of extremes.

regularity than apparent zeal. He recommends a judicious form of piety. Extremes repel him. His preferences lie in the observance of a golden mean. To follow the religion of the majority of one's compatriots just as to obey the political constitution of one's country, is in Swift's opinion to act as a well-behaved man. He rails against the arguments of the Catholics, the strife and the fanaticism of the various sects ; his nature leads him to embrace a doctrine of average reason. But he rebels with all his energy against the ambitions and rational attempt of Deism. And in his reaction against the looseness of morals, he goes to the extent of eulogising, not without a suspicion of irony, the benefits accruing from a purely exterior and social submission to the attitude of belief, for hypocrisy is, after all, better than cynicism.

The bitterness resulting from a long series of disappointments. Despite the conformity of his declarations and principles, Swift aroused a deep and secret unrest in the minds of those in power during his time, the patrons of Church and State. Queen Anne, above all a devout churchwoman, refused to recognize his political services in a fitting way. Although he was a favourite of a minister, he did not obtain the office of a bishop which he believed he could expect. At the critical moments in his life, an unkind destiny always seemed to baffle his desires. It was with the bitterness of a long series of disappointments that he withdrew from court intrigues. His great works, those in which his genius is laid bare, terrified or scandalized all orthodoxies. In *A Tale of a Tub*, his religious thought shows a movement of pitiless negation. In the preface which he wrote for this work, he is indignant that he should be classed among the Deists by superficial readers. To us of today, the error appears quite natural.

The protest of a free mind against conventional lies. Swift is of the view that all religious organizations are built up on half-conscious acts of cowardice, and the surrender of the highest aspirations of faith. He thinks that the very ardour which exalts the most enthusiastic of believers—the Quakers, the Ranters, and those Huguenots, refugees from France, who at this time are making a public show of their convulsions—is bound up with the confused fermentations of animality. The *Discourse Concerning the Mechanical Operation of the Spirit* no doubt admits, in passing, that prophetic inspiration can be an immediate gift from the Godhead ; but everything encourages the conjecture that this is a purely formal reserve ; for an over-zealous spirit in religion is traced back to the appetites alone of the flesh. The spirit of this treatise, under its form of concentrated irony, is that of a modern study of the pathology of mystic states. And with the taste for sound, even if bitter, truth, there is mingled the keen and secret joy of a moral revenge, the protest of a free mind against conventional lies, even if these lies be sacred.

The attack on certain forms of intellectual ambition. Swift treats the works of reason with no better respect. *The Battle of the Books* is fired by an anger still aimed at a special object—at certain forms of intellectual ambition and error. Pedantry, false erudition, rabid controversies, are connected with the thesis of the "moderns", the insolent, mean enemies of the glory of the ancients. The despiser of Phalaris, Bentley—who yet was not wrong—is over-whelmed with classical contumely ; the verve of this pamphlet, full as it is of allusions to the images and devices of the epic, is another example of the fertility at this time of the mock-heroic theme.

Swift's targets in "Gulliver's Travels". *Gulliver's Travels* singularly broadens the indictment of the very effort by which the human mind claims to know and to understand. Philosophy appears in the light of an ambitious jargon ; metaphysics, of a mystification ; while theory, that sterile activity, shackles the efficient play of practice in all domains and in a hundred and one different ways. This satiric realism is given free scope in the painting of the illusory kingdom of Laputa. The fever of financial speculation, of rational inquiry, and of mechanical progress is presented as the agitated ardour of over-heated brains in which are unceasingly hatched all kinds of projects and inventions, and preposterous chimeras.

No trust in science. Swift does not seem to put any trust in science, either in its present or in its future. He derides equally the erudite inferences of Bentley and Newton's theory of gravitation ; these hypotheses are, according to him, the playthings of thought ; fashion upholds them, and then they pass away. He joylessly witnesses, in the first flush of the modern age, the awakening of the mental unrest which will produce the scientific conquest of the world ; his attention, turned towards the past, is above all aware of the innumerable failures of scholastic charlatanry. The moderns, according to him, have added nothing which really matters to the sound reasoning of the ancients.

A dark picture of political institutions in "Gulliver's Travels." Swift paints a dark picture of political institutions and manners. His experience had shown him the hidden springs of power, and the part played by corruption and intrigue. He writes on the side of the opposition during the despised administration of Sir Robert Walpole. Elsewhere, in his didactic treatises, he shows himself aware of the necessity for a strong authority, supported by the prestige of religion, and in its turn supporting the spiritual hierarchy. Although he has nothing about him of the uncompromising Tory, he is an advocate of order. But *Gulliver's Travels* throws the light of superior and destructive irony upon the smallness of the means, the vanity of the motives, the illusion of the catch-words , through which kings retained thrones and magistrates their offices ; and from one end of society to the other the fearful influence of man upon man is exercised. It is not only the English political life of his time which he thus dissects. The monarchy

itself, the paraphernalia that surround it, the courts and courtiers, the debating assemblies, the struggles of parties, the wiles of the favourites of both sexes—everything upon which, in fact, rested the contemporary administration of Europe—is fiercely attacked by this corrosive satire.

A depressing picture of mankind in "Gulliver's Travels". To serve the needs of his allegory, Swift carries us from the country of the dwarfs to that of the giants ; in the former, everything is a grotesque and despicable parody of that human reality which is invested by convention with great prestige; in the latter, it is the human reality which reveals itself, directly, as ridiculous and infinitely small. But Brobdingnag and its patriarchal manners are not an ideal seriously proposed to man ; this fancy vanishes as soon as one grasps its thin texture ; it is only invented to show us better our littleness and to crush us under a sense of our miseries. Mankind cuts a sorry and ugly figure in both Lilliput and Brobdingnag.

The philosophical horses and the Yahoos. In order to realize even a slight idea of a noble existence, Swift seems to think that one must forsake the human species. Animal life may supply us with figures of reasonable beings. In the land of the philosophical horses, we at last come upon something which in the countries known to us we have looked for in vain. Our civilization, when explained to these wise quadrupeds, is not understood by them because our perversity surpasses all understanding. And in the lower depths of their civilized society, the ignoble race of two-footed monsters (the Yahoos) drags itself along. If we look at this ignoble race without prejudice, we shall recognize ourselves in the Yahoos. What we call bestiality is the very attribute of man.

Difficult to understand Swift's mind. With relentless cruelty, Swift drives our thought back towards the sordidness of physical existence. It is difficult to decide whether this attitude provides evidence of the morbid tendencies in Swift's nature or whether it shows the need for the whole truth, a realism of mind, an ironic lesson of the moralist aimed at the vanities of mankind, or the lucid, voluntary pessimism of a mind that is firmly and coolly Christian.

Swift's pessimism. One element in Swift's attitude dominates all others : pessimism. Swift does not pass judgment upon the universe or upon the world of man in the absolutely negative way which is the mark of philosophic pessimism. His mind mistrusts general affirmations, and at the same time his status as a priest does not permit him to pronounce one of those explicit words of despair which Christian faith disapproves. Yet he is intellectually hostile to what exists ; his emotions have a much larger share in his judgments when he condemns than when he accepts reality. His verdict on life is of the psychological and moral order. It bears upon the quality of men in themselves, and upon the use they make of the occasions to act which society offers.

Personal frustration at the root of his pessimism. According to Swift, it is in the souls that the evil lies ; from the souls it radiates over all the relations of human beings with one another. This pessimism is so clearly coloured by individual experience that one may see in it the generalized after-effect of the shocks felt by the sensibility, or more precisely by the ambition of Swift ; it is so personal in its expression that one is tempted to find in it the painful consciousness of an impaired physical and mental health, the reflection of inner sufferings which have ended by ruining the balance of his mind.

The "Journal to Stella". And yet, Swift has not been always the victim of this bitterness ; at least not to the same degree. Both his intimate life and his literary life betray moments of animation, of expansiveness, almost of gaiety. It is when he comes out of himself, out of his concentrated and solitary meditation that his thought appears to relax. At the time when he was wholly engrossed in political strife, from 1710 to 1714, Swift was carried onward by the tide of action. The *Journal to Stella* is a collection of letters in which he jots down familiarly the story of his life for the girl to whom he was attached by an affection which has always remained mysterious. The *Journal* is one of the most attractive documents of its kind. It is full of effusions in which we perceive the note of a strange temperament, somewhat sickly, but a note full of playfulness and tender puerilities. Whether it be the bustle of public affairs, or sentiment, which at a particular moment occupies Swift more, something is lifting him above that aggressive reflection which was clearly noticeable in *A Tale of a Tub*.

Swift as a champion of Irish causes. Ireland also saved him at times from the obsessive disquietude of his mind. He was deeply moved by the miserable lot of the country where he was born but which he did not look upon as his own though he knew how to speak out in its favour. In 1720 he advised the Irish people to reply to the economic pressure of the English by refusing to buy the products of English manufacture. In 1724, he published a series of Letters (signed "M.B. Drapier") against the new copper currency which an Englishman had obtained the licence for coining, and the weight of which did not correspond with its official value. With an instinctive understanding of the popular mind, he in those letters wrote a language full of such simple and sound sense, and roused so cleverly the mistrust of the people, that the British government had perforce to yield in the face of a general protest. On this occasion Swift was the accepted mouthpiece of a people, and he always remained proud of it.

His distinctive characteristics as a writer. In many subjects, his fertile talent as a polemist* was able to expose clearly and coolly the ideas of a lively and original but balanced judgment. There

*polemist : controversialist ; one who participates in a wordy war.

was in Swift a literary critic, a political writer, and a theorist of the rights of the Church. But his work as a whole is recognizable by the most dominant characteristics of his genius. He is above all great by virtue of his allegorical invention as applied to satire, by his humour and irony, and by the marvellous ease and precision of his style.

Irony, allegory, verve, ingenuity, concrete invention. Irony and allegory are, in Swift, fused into one. What is unique, is the suggestive power which results from the play of his symbolical imagination ; and the interest here lies in the manner in which his mind loads the symbols with a meaning enormously rich and insulting. The apologues* on which are founded *A Tale of a Tub* and *The Battle of the Books* have nothing original about them. Likewise, *Gulliver's Travels* is first of all a novel of adventure and a story of wonder, and as such is of no more value than many others. But the working out of those data is with Swift incomparable. The verve, the ingenuity, the concrete invention, which embroider the general themes in these books with numerous variations, give to the least detail an irresistible eloquence, and store it with a world of allusions. These qualities also render the supernatural acceptable and normal. Such are the elements of an art which Swift carries to the highest degree.

A humorist as well as an ironist. It has been customary to treat Swift as a master of irony, because his mockery does not have that kindly after-taste which is generally regarded as the distinctive mark of of the humorist. But while his effects are very often more in the nature of irony (which depicts the ideal, and pretends to believe that it is real), they are also very often enlivened by humour (which depicts the real, and pretends to believe that it is ideal). The working of transposition, which is common to them, brings these two literary kinds very close together, and it becomes difficult to distinguish their boundaries. Swift likes to hover playfully over these boundaries, and to pass from one domain to the other. He is no less a master in one than in the other. He handles humour in a superior manner because he is keenly alive to all the reactions which the real sets up in our emotion or in our intelligence and he knows how to evoke it in all its crude force. He can efface himself entirely behind the facts which he presents to us, thus enhancing their eloquence with his impassivity. The best-known piece in this category is the practical, commercial proposal to utilize the flesh of Irish children as butcher's meat. This piece has all the precision of an estimate and the calm of a financial statement.

The problem of his personality. A morbid element may have existed in his thinking. His personality is a problem which has not yet been fully solved. This personality certainly contained both grief and instability, and a deep trouble which finally led to madness. But this anguish and this unrest were dominated by the force

*apologue : moral fable.

of an extraordinary lucid intellect and of a will which knew how to govern passion even when it delivered itself up to it. Upon a temperament which possessed all the germs of moral incertitude and which no doubt, in the following century, would have developed into an ardent Romanticism, Swift built up a work that was wholly classical in its form. The inner tension reveals itself only in the compactness of the expression, in the number of the intentions, in the restrained violence of some effects. Everything is clear in this style, despite the use made of allusion; everything in it seems sound, normal, and self-controlled. It is only in some familiar effusions, such as the *Journal to Stella*, that we find the signs of an oddity in the manner of writing which is at times disquieting. Everywhere else the language is that of reason itself, and in no way abstract and dry.

His style. Swift is the master of the concrete world; he knows how to utilize this concrete world; and here again he is the humorist. He know show to employ the racy word, sometimes the coarse word; he frankly violates the proprieties or veils the realism of his subjects with ironic periphrases. But the concrete facts of experience, as well as the ideas, the sentiments, and the shades of meaning find expression in the most simple, vigorous and straightforward prose. Each word is in its place, quite naturally; the most fitting word is always chosen, without effort, through a spontaneous instinct. A great variety of tone is achieved by means of a flexible adaptation of the language to the theme. He passes with the greatest ease, from the most naive exposition to the pseudo-epic style, and from the weightiest discussion to the freest pleasantry.

5

"Gulliver's Travels" : An Introduction

Swift's possible debt to the Scriblerus Club. *Gulliver's Travels* is the most famous of all the works of Swift. The germs of this book has been traced to the celebrated Scriblerus Club which came into existence in the last months of Queen Anne's reign, when Swift joined with Arbuthnot, Pope, Gay, and a few other writers in a scheme to ridicule all false tastes in learning. This literary group was strongly Tory in character and functioned as a kind of counter-balance to the Whig circle which had grown up about Addison and Steele. The Club was organized in the autumn of 1713. It was proposed that the Club should undertake some sort of joint satiric composition, and finally it was settled that this should take the form of a mock biography of a universal pedant who was given the name "Martinus Scriblerus". Years were to pass before the *Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus* appeared in print. Pope published it in 1741, but much of it must have been written during the period of the Club's greatest activity, which fell between February 1714 and June 1714. Swift's part in this joint enterprise has not been definitely established. The sixteenth chapter of the *Memoirs* as published in 1741 gives an account of Martinus Scriblerus's travels, four in number. According to Pope, Swift took the first hints for his *Gulliver's Travels* from that chapter. However, the connection of *Gulliver's Travels* with the original scheme is very slight, and appears chiefly in Part III of the work.

Part III of "Gulliver's Travels" written last of all. Swift's correspondence with some of his friends shows that he was at work on *Gulliver's Travels* in 1721, that Parts I and II were finished by the end of 1723 and Part IV by January 1724, and that in the latter year he was engaged on Part III. In August or September 1725 he told Pope that he was correcting and completing the work.

The date of publication and the enormous success of the book. The full title of Swift's famous work is *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, in Four Parts, by Lemuel Gulliver, first a Surgeon, and then a Captain of Several Ships.* The book was published anonymously by the end of October 1726, negotiations with the publishers having been carried on by Swift's friends, Charles Ford and Erasmus Lewis. The book proved an immediate and tremendous success. In November 1726, Arbuthnot wrote that the book was in

everybody's hands, and that many were led by its verisimilitude to believe that the incidents narrated in the book had really occurred. However, one Irish bishop said that it was full of improbable lies and, for his part, he hardly believed a word of it. The first edition of the book was soon exhausted, and before the end of the year two more were called for. But this was only the beginning. There were further editions in London; two different publishers brought the book out in Dublin; it was summarized and abridged, serialized in the newspapers, and in course of time translated into French, Dutch, and German.

The appeal of the book to young readers. *Gulliver's Travels* has not only become a classic as a satire on the human race but also a classic as a children's book. It has delighted the young people from the day of its earliest appearance. Soon after its publication, Pope and Gay wrote to Swift that the book was being universally read, from the cabinet-council to the nursery. Its appeal to the young people is not difficult to understand. The first two Parts of the book have a certain fairy-tale quality about them. The juvenile imagination readily believes Gulliver's adventures among the pigmies and the giants. For the adult mind, however, the appeal of the book lies in its serious purpose.

The object of the book : "to vex the world". Swift had written to Pope that his chief object was to vex the world rather than divert it. What he meant was that he wanted to arouse among his readers a feeling of dissatisfaction with themselves and their fellows for their vices and follies and thus to stimulate them to amend themselves, if possible, in the light of this comic exposure of the faults and shortcomings of mankind. While the book does succeed in vexing, and even disturbing and shocking its readers, there is also much in it to divert and amuse them. The satire is often cruel, and in Part IV it is almost horrifying. But there is plenty of pure fun and comedy in the book also.

Gulliver not to be wholly identified with Swift. It should be kept in mind that Gulliver is a purely imaginary character, not to be identified with Swift himself. Of course, at many points in the course of the story Gulliver does serve as a spokesman and mouthpiece for Swift, but at many other points he remains a separate and distinct individual in his own right. In Part IV, especially, Gulliver's reactions to the Houyhnhnms and his changed attitude towards members of the human race in the closing stages of the story are not at all to be attributed to Swift himself.*

Imaginary voyages by an imaginary character. The book has been divided into four parts, describing Gulliver's voyages to different countries. Just as Gulliver is an imaginary character, so the voyages and the experiences of Gulliver in different lands are

* However, in the opinion of some critics, even in Part IV Gulliver fully represents Swift himself.

also imaginary. And the lands visited by Gulliver are imaginary too (except Japan). Part I describes Gulliver's voyage to a country called Lilliput, and his experiences among the Lilliputians (that is, the people inhabiting that country). Part II describes his voyage to Brobdingnag and his experiences in that country. Part III describes his voyage to several countries which include Laputa, Balnibarbi, Glubbdubdrib, Luggnagg, and Japan. And Part IV describes his voyage to the country of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos.

The realistic effect. Apart from Gulliver's experiences among these different nations, much circumstantial detail is given to us in connection with the different voyages of Gulliver. These details include references to the latitude and longitude of the position of Gulliver's ship at different times, allusions to geographical locations, and similar other matters which have the effect of lending an air of realism to the story. At the very outset, Gulliver gives some account of himself and his family, and his desire to see the world and visit unknown countries. At the end of every voyage, Gulliver tells us of his return to his family, and here again he gives us certain details to strengthen the realistic effect.

An allegorical satire, intended to instruct mankind. *Gulliver's Travels* is an allegorical work. In other words, everything in it cannot be taken literally except by children. The mature reader will understand that Swift has a serious moral purpose in writing these accounts of the voyages of Gulliver to different lands. An allegory conveys its meaning in a veild and hidden manner, not in an obvious manner. In other words, the real meaning in an allegory does not lie on the surface but is hidden below the surface which we must probe. Swift is here mocking at the way human beings behave. We find in the book a merciless exposure of different categories and classes of people—kings, queens, politicians, lawyers, physicians, scientists, and others. There is hardly any institution in the civilized life of the European countries that escapes the scrutiny and the scathing criticism of Swift. Much of the condemnation of human society and human institutions is expressed in comic terms, but much of it is offensive and corrosive. In Part IV especially, the satire and the condemnation become extremely indignant, and are insulting to the human race. As a commentator points out, to amuse was not Swift's sole object. His other object was to instruct the race of mankind by a witty exposure of human follies, absurdities, errors, defects, etc.

The voyage to Lilliput in Part I. In the voyage to Lilliput, religious and political divisions are humorously burlesqued. The folly of political and religious fanatics is exposed with reference to the constant quarrels between the High-Heels and the Low-Heels, and between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians, in which the blood of thousands of people has been shed. Besides reflections of a general nature, the voyage to Lilliput contains particular allusions to the royal court and the politics of England. Sir Robert

Walpole is caricatured as Flimnap ; the High-Heels and Low-Heels represent the political parties of Tories and Whigs ; the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians represent the religious sects of Catholics and Protestants. When the emperor's heels are described as lower than those of anybody else at the court, the reference is to the preference shown by King George I to the Whigs. Many other allusions may also be traced. In addition to all this, some of Gulliver's remarks on the institutions of Lilliput serve as useful comments upon the legal policy of his own country, England : for instance, when he mentions that the Lilliputians treated fraud as a greater crime than theft, and alludes to their policy in rewarding merit as well as punishing vice.

The voyage to Brobdingnag in Part II. In the voyage to Brobdingnag Swift turns the opposite end of the telescope, and shows us in what manner a people of immense stature, and gifted with a sound and cool judgment, look at the principles and politics of Europe. In this Part of the book the satire is of a more general nature ; there are few particular references to political events ; and no circumstances are mentioned which are not applicable to all places. While Lilliput was a land inhabited by pigmies or dwarfs, Brobdingnag is the land of giants or of persons of an immense stature.

The voyage to Laputa in Part III. In the voyage to Laputa, the satire is aimed at the abuses of science. The targets here are those projectors who, leaving their common sense behind them, wander into the vast regions of speculative philosophy. It must be borne in mind that the satire is not aimed at true science but at its abuses.

The voyage to the land of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos in Part IV. The satire contained in the voyage to the Houyhnhnms in Part IV is more intense than in any of the earlier voyages. This voyage exhibits mankind in a light too degraded for contemplation, and the satire is too exaggerated. However, if the picture of the Yahoos is disgusting, that is exactly what the author intended. But the author has failed to make the portrayal of the Houyhnhnms to be very attractive or inviting as he aimed at doing. The representation of the Houyhnhnms is cold and insipid. These beings have their virtues, but these virtues are all negative. The Houyhnhnms are devoid of all those tender passions and affections without which life becomes a burden. No doubt these beings possess some noble virtues and even some splendid accomplishments. For instance, in poetry they excel all animals ; and they have exalted notions of frienship and benevolence. In spite of all this, the Houyhnhnms somehow fail to appeal to us as models of perfection.

6

"Gulliver's Travels" : A Critical Summary

A LETTER FROM CAPTAIN GULLIVER TO HIS COUSIN SYMPSON

Although this "Letter' is dated 1727 it was first published in Faulkner's edition of *Gulliver's Travels* in 1735. Gulliver is here called Captain because on the last of his four voyages, he had received the command of the ship by which he was voyaging. In the course of that particular voyage* he had been overpowered by the members of his own crew and had then been set adrift on the sea. (On the previous three voyages, Gulliver had been the surgeon looking after the physical welfare of the crew.)

The name Sympson most probably alludes to a man called William Symson, who published a book called *A New Voyage to the East Indies*, in 1715. The name "Dampier" in this Letter refers to William Dampier (1652-1715), a well-known mariner who published several volumes about his voyages. His chief work was *A New Voyage Round the World* which appeared in 1697. In the reference to Queen Anne in this Letter Swift seems to be making an ironical mention of the steadily increasing power of Robert Walpole. Godolphin was Sidney Godolphin (1645-1712), the Lord High Treasurer in England from 1702-1710. Oxford was Robert Harley (1661-1724) who became Earl of Oxford and was appointed the Lord High Treasurer in 1711.

In this Letter which is supposed to have been written by Gulliver to the publisher of Gulliver's account of his travels, Gulliver objects to many of the omissions** in the published version. Gulliver regrets that the trust he had reposed in Mr. Sympson has not been justified by the events.

Gulliver further regrets the fact that the publication of the account of his travels has brought about no change at all among

* This voyage eventually took him to the country of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos.

** It is indeed a fact that the publisher of *Gulliver's Travels* had taken a number of liberties with the text supplied to him. The publisher's real name was Benjamin Motte.

his countrymen whom he regards as no better than the Yahoos. Gulliver says that he was aware in the very beginning that the Yahoos were utterly incapable of any improvement or reform by precept or example, and now, several months after the publication of his account, he finds that no change in their behaviour has taken place. Political parties and factions still exist in the country ; judges are still unfair and partial ; advocates are still dishonest and arrogant ; the education of the young noblemen is still defective ; the physicians still thrive on disease ; the female Yahoos are still unchaste and foolish ; wit and merit are still not rewarded ; and authors of ability are still starving in the country.

Gulliver further complains that some of the Yahoos are so impudent as to think that his book of travels is a mere fiction invented by his brain. These Yahoos, says Gulliver, have alleged that neither the Yahoos nor the Houyhnhnms have any real existence. In other words, the very authenticity of his account of his travels has been questioned. Gulliver then asserts that he has been absolutely truthful in his account and, though born a Yahoo, he had come into close contact with Houyhnhnms by whose example he was able completely to get rid of every tendency to tell lies or make ambiguous statements. Finally, Gulliver admits that, after his return from his voyages, certain corruptions of his Yahoo nature have revived in him because of his renewed contacts with the people of his country, particularly with the members of his own family.

Critical Comments

This "Letter" addressed by Gulliver to the supposed publisher, Mr. Sympson, was written six or seven months after the original publication of the account of Gulliver's travels. In this Letter, Gulliver regrets having agreed to the publication of his account under the pressure of Mr. Sympson. Gulliver had thought that the published account of his travels would produce some reformative effect on the Englishmen who would read that account. But Gulliver feels very disappointed to find that the published account of his travels has brought about no change among the people of his country. In other words, his hope of any improvement in the behaviour and conduct of different categories of people in his country has come to nothing.

This Letter is, of course, fictitious. Gulliver himself, as we know, is a fictitious personality invented by Swift. Of course, Gulliver is a mouthpiece of Swift himself. Therefore, when Gulliver complains that the publications of the account of his travels has not served the purpose which it was intended to serve, it is Swift himself complaining that his book called *Gulliver's Travels* has failed to bring about that change in English society which he had aimed at in writing the book.

Every satirist is a reformer, as satire always aims at correcting human follies and human vices. Swift in his book had pinpointed the follies and vices which he had witnessed in the English society of his time. In fact, Swift had focussed attention upon the follies and vices of all mankind and not merely the English society of his time. But he found that, even several months after the publication of this book, conditions had remained the same. Of course, he had not expected any miracle to happen. All that he wishes to convey to us through this Letter (supposedly written by Gulliver) is that human follies and vices are so deep-rooted that they cannot be eradicated.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER

Gulliver settled near Newark in Nottinghamshire. This note by the publisher, Richard Sympson, addressed to the reader, is intended as an introduction to the book, *Gulliver's Travels*, and to the principal character in it. Mr. Sympson informs us that Mr. Lemuel Gulliver is an old and intimate friend of his and that there is a certain relationship between them by the mother's side. About three years before the publication of this book, Mr. Gulliver had shifted from his house in Redriff to another situated near Newark in Nottinghamshire, where he then settled down to a life of retirement. He had left Redriff because he had become fed up with large numbers of people coming to see him there.

The original home of Gulliver's family. Mr. Sympson further informs us that Mr. Gulliver's family had originally come from Oxfordshire, and that this fact has been verified by Mr. Sympson who had seen in the churchyard of Banbury (in Oxfordshire) several tombs and monuments of the Gullivers.

The truthful account of Gulliver's travels. Mr. Sympson then proceeds to tell us that, before leaving Redriff, Mr. Gulliver had given him a written account of his travels. Mr. Sympson had been greatly impressed by the air of truth in the entire account. The author of this account, namely Mr. Gulliver, had earned a reputation for truthfulness even among his neighbours at Redriff. Mr. Sympson had decided, at the advice of several worthy persons, to publish Mr. Gulliver's account in order to acquaint the world with Mr. Gulliver's experiences and to offer an excellent entertainment to the young English noblemen.

Omissions from the original account. Finally, Mr. Sympson says that he has deleted from Gulliver's original account certain passages relating to the winds and tides and longitudes and latitudes because these details were in his opinion not necessary in the published version.

Critical Comments

The publisher's note addressed to the reader is evidently intended to lend an air of authenticity to the account of Gulliver's

travels which follows. In other words, the publisher wishes to assure us at the very outset that the following account of Gulliver's travels is not imaginary or fanciful but a faithful record of what a certain individual had seen, observed, and experienced. Mr. Gulliver himself, we are told, is an actual person who was first living in Redriff but who, feeling weary of the large numbers of visitors coming to see him, had shifted to Newark in the county of Nottinghamshire. Thus both the author of these travels and the account of these travels have to be regarded by us as genuine.

It may here be pointed out that even in the course of the narration Gulliver several times adopts certain devices to convince the reader that the account which he is giving is true and genuine. But in the introductory note in the beginning comes from the pen of the publisher who too wishes to convince us that the account as published is genuine and truthful.

PART I : A VOYAGE TO LILLIPUT

PART I, CHAPTER 1

Gulliver's medical studies and early voyages. Lemuel Gulliver was the third of the five sons of a small land-owner in Nottinghamshire. At the age of fourteen, Gulliver was sent to Emanuel College in Cambridge where he stayed for three years and applied himself closely to his studies. Thereafter he served as an apprentice to an eminent surgeon in London, and there he remained for four years. He was next sent to Leyden where for about three years he studied medicine. After returning from his medical studies, he went on a couple of voyages because it was his ambition to do a good deal of travelling. Then he decided to settle down in London and practise medicine. He married a girl called Mary who was the daughter of a hosier, Edmond Burton, and who brought him a fairly good dowry.

Gulliver, a surgeon on a ship. As Gulliver's medical practice did not prove very successful, he took up a surgeon's job on a ship which was to make a voyage to the South Sea. The ship called Antelope and commanded by Captain William Pritchard, sailed from Bristol on the 4th May, 1699.

Shipwreck, but Gulliver safe, on an island. At first the voyage seemed to be very prosperous, but soon afterwards the ship was overtaken by a violent storm, and it got wrecked. While most of the sailors perished in the sea, Gulliver was able to swim ashore. Feeling exhausted, he fell asleep near the seashore.

Human beings, only six inches in height. After several hours of sleep, when Gulliver woke up, he found himself bound with chains and surrounded by a crowd of human creatures who were just six inches in height. These human creatures of a pigmy size were holding bows and arrows and were shooting arrows upon

him causing him a good deal of pain. However, soon afterwards, under the orders of their King, to whom the presence of this strange man of a huge size had been reported, they offered him food and drink, but without releasing him from his chains.

Gulliver, taken to the King of the island. After having fed him, the strange human creatures of this land made arrangements to take him to their King. It was a problem for them to transport a man who, by comparison with them, was a huge giant, to the royal court, but because these people were most excellent mathematicians, they succeeded in devising a method of taking him, in his chains, by a huge carriage to the metropolis. The King, accompanied by many principal lords of his court, came out to look at Gulliver whose huge dimensions excited a lot of curiosity and wonder.

Critical Comments

Gulliver's arrival on the island of Lilliput. In this opening chapter, we are given a brief account of the family background and the early life of Lemuel Gulliver who is the narrator in this novel. Gulliver goes on a voyage as a ship's surgeon. The ship is wrecked, and Gulliver manages to swim ashore. He finds himself in a strange country called Lilliput, and is made a prisoner as soon as the islanders see him sleeping soundly on the ground. The people of this country, the Lilliputians, are very small in stature, being only six inches high. It is evident that these people could not have taken Gulliver a prisoner if they had come across him when he was awake, because he is stronger than even five hundred of them put together. He is then transported to the metropolis in order to be presented to the Emperor who too is of the same size as the other people of this country.

The comic vein of the narration. The very opening chapter strikes the keynote of the entire novel. What we are reading is a comic and satirical book. A vein of humour runs through the whole of the opening chapter. The very idea that there are human beings only six inches high is funny. We know of pigmies and dwarfs among human beings, but no dwarf or pigmy is just six inches high. The contrast between a human being of a normal stature, like Gulliver, and the inhabitants of Lilliput is very amusing. Similarly, the devices by which he is transported to the metropolis are also quite amusing. It takes nine hundred Lilliputians three hours to raise Gulliver to the level of a huge carriage by which he is to be carried to the royal court. But even more amusing is the manner in which Gulliver is fed. Several ladders are applied to his sides, and about a hundred Lilliputians climb up those ladders in order to carry baskets full of meat and drink and put them close to his mouth.

PART I, CHAPTER 2

Gulliver, an object of great curiosity in the Lilliputian capital. On arriving in the metropolis, Gulliver felt the urgent need to

urinate. As he had been lodged in a deserted ancient temple, he took the earliest opportunity to relieve himself of his uneasy load. In the meantime, the Emperor came on horse-back to take a good look at Gulliver and to talk to him if possible. The Emperor surveyed Gulliver with great admiration for the latter's huge size. The Empress and the young Princes and Princesses sat down in their chairs at a safe distance from Gulliver in order to look at the marvellous giant who had arrived in their country. His Imperial Majesty made several efforts to communicate with Gulliver, and Gulliver too tried to talk to the Emperor but neither of them understood the language of the other. Meantime, a large crowd had collected to take a look at the strange visitor to their country. Many of them started shooting arrows at him and one arrow narrowly missed one of his eyes. When five or six of the Lilliputians were pushed forward by the colonel trying to control the mob, Gulliver caught hold of them and could have crushed them to death, but he refrained from taking any such action whereupon his leniency was greatly appreciated by everyone. As the news of his arrival spread through the kingdom, large numbers of rich, idle, and curious people from the villages around also arrived to see him.

Gulliver, well looked after, and taught the Lilliputian language. The Emperor, after consultations with his courtiers, decided not to put Gulliver to death, but to keep him and properly to feed him. Accordingly, elaborate arrangements were made for Gulliver's board and lodging. Arrangements were also made to teach him the language of the Lilliputians, and in about three weeks' time he had learned enough of the language to be able to communicate with the Emperor and a few others.

Gulliver thoroughly searched. In accordance with the law of the land, Gulliver was then thoroughly searched and an inventory of all the articles found on his person was prepared. His sword and his pistols were among the articles which were taken away from him. His watch was one of the items which gave rise to a feeling of great surprise in all those who saw it. Only Gulliver's pair of spectacles escaped the notice of those who searched him, because the spectacles were in a private pocket of Gulliver's coat. In the inventory which was prepared by the officials, Gulliver was given the name Quinbus Flestrin, which meant "man-mountain".

Critical Comments

Gulliver, treated hospitably because of his gentle behaviour. This chapter describes the reaction of the Emperor of Lilliputians on seeing Gulliver who is looked upon as a "man-mountain". Gulliver has not been released from his chains because of the danger which, in the opinion of the Lilliputian, he poses to the country. Under the orders of the Emperor, Gulliver is treated quite hospitably. Learned men are appointed to teach him this

country's language. He wins the favour of the royal court by his gentle behaviour and mild manners. However, he is subjected to a close search and many of his belongings including his sword and his pistols are taken away from him.

Comic elements in this chapter. A vein of humour runs through this chapter also. It is amusing to read that, under the orders of the Emperor, the cooks and butlers give him food and drink in vehicles upon wheels so that he should be able easily to pick up the meat and the drink. Twenty vehicles filled with meat make hardly two or three mouthfuls for Gulliver. Similarly ten vessels full of liquor amount only to a single draught for him. Likewise, six hundred beds of the Lilliputians are put together in order to make a single bed for Gulliver. It is feared that the diet to be served to Gulliver everyday would prove a very expensive proposition and might even cause a famine in the country. The reactions of the Lilliputians to the various articles, especially the sword and the watch, found on his person, are also comic.

PART I, CHAPTER 3

Rope-dancing, a test of ability and merit. Gulliver's gentleness and good behaviour won him the favour of the Emperor and his court to such an extent that he began to entertain the hope that he would soon be released from his chains. He had also now made good progress in understanding and speaking the language of the Lilliputians. Some of the activities of the Lilliputians were a source of great amusement to Gulliver. One such activity was that of the rope-dancers. This activity was practised by those persons who were candidates for high offices at the Imperial court. All candidates were asked to dance on a rope, and whoever jumped the highest without falling was offered a high office. Very often the chief ministers themselves were commanded to show their skill. For instance, Flimnap, the Treasurer, was required to dance on a tight rope and to show his superiority to others in this respect. Similarly, Reldresal, Principal Secretary for Private Affairs, was also required to show similar skill. Sometimes such displays of skill led to fatal accidents.

Coloured silken threads awarded for leaping over sticks. Another activity practised by the candidates for high office was to leap over, and sometimes to creep under, a stick which the Emperor held in his hands. Whoever performed his part with the greatest nimbleness was rewarded with a blue-coloured silken thread. The next man was rewarded with a red-coloured thread ; while the man who came third was rewarded with a green-coloured thread. All these threads were then worn by the winners round their waists.

Gulliver, released on certain conditions. In response to Gulliver's repeated petitions for freedom, the Emperor decided to release him on certain conditions which were framed by a member of the Imperial Cabinet, Skyresh Bolgolam, who was very hostile to

Gulliver. Gulliver, the man-mountain, was required to take on oath that he would abide by these conditions. It was also decided by the Emperor that, after his release, Gulliver would be allowed a quantity of meat and drink sufficient for the support of 1728 Lilliputians because, according to the calculations of the Emperor's mathematicians, he would need that much food and drink for his maintenance.

Critical Comments

A satire on some of the political figures of Swift's time. This chapter describes some of the activites at the Imperial court. These activities include rope-dancing and leaping over, or creeping under, sticks. The account of these activities is obviously a satire on the way in which political offices were distributed among the candidates by the English King. Flimnap is Sir Robert Walpole who was the prime minister of England from 1715 to 1717 and then again from 1721 to 1742. Dancing on a tight rope symbolizes Walpole's skill in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues. Similarly Reldresal represents Lord Carteret who was appointed by Walpole to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Again, the phrase "one of the king's cushions" refers to one of King George's mistresses who helped to restore Walpole to favour after his fall in 1717. The ancient temple in which Gulliver is housed probably refers to Westminster Hall in which Charles I had been condemned to death, or it may just mean an empty building large enough to accommodate Gulliver who is a man-mountain from Lilliputian standards. The search of Gulliver by the Lilliputians may have some reference to a committee which had been formed by the Whigs to investigate the conduct of the previous government and especially of Oxford and Bolingbroke who were suspected of treasonable relationships with France and the Old Pretender. The Whigs came to power on the accession of George I in 1714, and the said committee was formed in 1715. Swift here seems to be satirizing the activities of that Whig committee. Similarly, Skyresh Bogolam has been identified as the Earl of Nottingham whom Swift attacked because, though a Tory, he had withdrawn his support from the Harley Government.

A satire on the English King's conferment of distinctions on his favourites. The three fine silk threads which were awarded as prizes to the winners of various contests refer to the various distinctions which were conferred by the English King on his favourites. Blue is the colour of the Order of the Garter, red of the Order of the Bath, and green of the Order of the Thistle.

PART I, CHAPTER 4

Gulliver's sight-seeing trip through the metropolis. After being released from captivity Gulliver sought the Emperor's permission to go around the metropolis, Mildendo. The permission was granted and a proclamation was made that the people should keep away from Gulliver's route in order to avoid being crushed by the man-

mountain. The windows and roofs of houses were crowded with spectators, as Gulliver walked through the main street. Gulliver found that the town was capable of holding five hundred thousand people. The houses consisted of three to five storeys. The shops and markets were well-stocked. The Emperor's palace was situated in the centre of the city. Gulliver was able to catch a glimpse of the Empress and the young Princes and Princesses. The Empress smiled very graciously upon Gulliver, and offered her hand through the window to Gulliver to enable him to kiss it.

The conflict between Big-Endians and Little-Endians. One morning, about a fortnight after Gulliver had obtained his freedom, Reldresal, the Principal Secretary of Private Affairs, approached Gulliver and told him the state of affairs prevailing in the country. The country was faced with two dangers. Firstly, there was an opposition party in the country itself, and secondly there was the danger of an invasion by a foreign power. Reldresal explained that the country was divided into two parties, the Emperor's party and the opposition party. The reason for the conflict between the two parties was that, while the Emperor believed in boiled eggs being broken at the smaller end, the opponents insisted on breaking the eggs at the big end. The two parties were therefore known as Big-Endians and Little-Endians. Besides, there was a conflict between those who wore high-heeled shoes, and those who wore low-heeled ones.

The external danger from Blesfuscu. The external danger was from the island of Blefuscu, which was believed to be the other great empire in the universe and which was as large and powerful as Lilliput. The opposition party in Lilliput was in league with the Emperor of Blefuscu. Reldresal also told Gulliver that the Emperor of Blefuscu had now assembled a huge fleet of ships to invade Lilliput. After listening to the whole account Gulliver promised his full support to the Emperor of Lilliput.

Critical Comments

Gulliver's assurance of help to the Emperor of Lilliput. The first part of this chapter describes the metropolis of Lilliput, and the Emperor's palace. In the second part of the chapter, there is a conversation between Gulliver and Reldresal, a Principal Secretary, regarding the affairs of the empire of Lilliput. As a result of this conversation, Gulliver offers to serve the Emperor of Lilliput in the war against the Emperor of Belfuscu.

A satire on hair-splitting theological disputes. The satirical vein is evident in the account of the conflict between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians. This account is actually a commentary on the history of religious controversy in England and a characteristic example of Swift's ability to ridicule hair-splitting theological disputes. The high heels and low heels refer to the political factions in England at that time. Blefuscu stands for France which, according to the Lilliputians, is the only other country in the universe.

PART I, CHAPTER 5

Gulliver's great service to the Emperor of Lilliput. Blefuscu was an island separated from Lilliput by a channel only eight hundred yards wide and about six feet deep. For Gulliver it was an easy matter to wade through the channel. So he told the Emperor of Lilliput that he would seize the whole fleet of ships belonging to the Emperor of Blefuscu before the fleet could invade Lilliput. Accordingly, Gulliver got busy and, making use of a few cables to which he tied some hooks, he succeeded in pulling fifty of the enemy's largest ships towards Lilliput and thus crippling the enemy fleet. This action of Gulliver's came as a great blow to the government of Blefuscu. The Emperor of Lilliput was delighted with Gulliver's achievement, and he conferred on Gulliver the highest title of honour which existed in Lilliput.

The Emperor's coolness towards Gulliver. The Emperor of Lilliput now expected Gulliver to continue doing damage to the armed forces of Blefuscu and to destroy that Empire completely so that he could rule the conquered people through a viceroy. As Gulliver was not in favour of causing so much destruction to the enemy, the Emperor became cool towards him.

The Empress's annoyance at Gulliver's manner of extinguishing a fire. As the government of Blefuscu had now signed a peace treaty with the Emperor of Lilliput, Gulliver expressed a desire to go and meet the Emperor of the other country. The Emperor gave him his oral permission but soon the Emperor became further prejudiced against Gulliver because Flimnap and Bolgolam were able to convince the Emperor that Gulliver's friendliness towards the monarch of Blefuscu would mean his withdrawal of support from Lilliput. However, Gulliver was able to neutralize this prejudice by rendering a most signal service to the Emperor of Lilliput. This service consisted in his extinguishing a fire in the appartment of the Empress. Sufficient water not being available, Gulliver extinguished the fire by urinating on it. The urination was plentiful because the evening before he had drunk a large quantity of wine. While the Emperor was happy about the fire having been extinguished, Gulliver had committed an illegal act because urination within the precincts of the palace was forbidden by law. The Empress felt greatly annoyed with Gulliver's act of urination in her apartment and she decided to shift to another building.

Critical Comments

The comic and satirical elements in this chapter. The whole of this chapter is amusing because of the comic contrast between things as described here and things to which we as normal human beings are accustomed. Gulliver's action in seizing fifty enemy ships at one stroke is funny because the ships must be as tiny as the human beings of these two countries (Lilliput and Blefuscu). It is amusing also to read that the Emperor of Lilliput wanted to bring

the Empire of Blefuscu under his own control because he would then be able to compel the people of that island, as well as the opposition party in his own country, to break boiled eggs at the smaller end in future. Gulliver resists the Emperor's proposal, because he does not wish to become an instrument of bringing a free and brave people into slavery. The manner in which two of the lords at the court instigate the Emperor against Gulliver is a satire on the intrigues which are a matter of routine at royal courts. Conventional rivalries and jealousies are also satirized by Swift when he tells us that the languages of the two Empires of Lilliput and Blefuscu differed greatly from each other and that each of the two nations was proud of the antiquity, beauty, and energy of its own language, with an open contempt for the other language.

Queen Anne ridiculed. The incident of Gulliver's extinguishing a fire in the Empress's apartment with his urine and the consequent annoyance of the Empress, has been interpreted as Queen Anne's disgust with Swift for having written '*A Tale of a Tub* which was mainly a satire on abuses in religion. As a reaction against Swift's satirical book, the Queen had refused to sanction the office of a bishop for Swift. Swift here seems to be ridiculing Queen Anne's hostility towards him. But it is also possible that Swift is here ridiculing royal ingratitude in general.

PART I, CHAPTER 6

Animals and trees as small as the Lilliputians themselves. As the common height of the Lilliputians was about six inches only, so there was an exact proportion in all ther animals as well as in plants and trees. For instance, the tallest horses and oxen were between four and five inches in height.

The burial of the dead in Lilliput. The Lilliputians buried their dead with the heads of the corpses directly downwards, because they held a belief that after eleven thousand moons the dead would rise from their graves, and that during this period the earth (which they thought to be flat) would turn upside down, so that the dead would, on coming back to life, find themselves standing on their feet.

Punishments for crimes, and rewards for law-abiding citizens. All crimes against the State in Lilliput were punished with the utmost severity. Fraud was there regarded as a greater crime than theft, and was always punished with death. At the same time those, who could produce evidence that they had strictly obeyed the laws of the country for seventythree moons, could claim certain special rights and also a cash reward.

Good morals preferred to great abilities. In the selection of persons for various government offices, more regard was paid to good morals than to great abilities. Anybody not believing in a Divine Providence was disqualified for holding a government post.

However, certain corruptions had entered public life and it was on account of such corruptions that certain persons got high posts by displaying their skill in dancing on tight ropes or in leaping over, and creeping under, sticks.

The education of children. Ingratitude was regarded as a capital crime in Lilliput. The ideas of the Lilliputians about the duties of parents and children were also different from those we are accustomed to. A child was not expected to feel any sense of obligation towards his father for begetting him or to his mother for giving him birth because, after all, the parents had done no favour to the child by producing him, their thoughts during the sexual intercourse having been otherwise employed. Furthermore, the education of the children in Lilliput was not the responsibility of the parents. There were public nurseries in every town where children of both sexes were brought up and educated till they attained the age of twenty moons. The children were encouraged to learn the virtues of justice, courage, modesty, religion, and patriotism. The children of labourers remained in their own homes, because, their business being only to plough the land, education was not thought to be necessary for them.

Flimnap's hostility to Gulliver. One day the Emperor sent a message to Gulliver that he and other members of his family would be dining with him. The Emperor also brought Flimnap with him. Gulliver was aware of the fact that Flimnap had always been his secret enemy. Flimnap pointed out to the Emperor the huge cost of the food which Gulliver, the man-mountain, consumed every day. Flimnap wanted that Gulliver should be dismissed from the country.

Gulliver's name involved in a scandal. Gulliver also came to know of a scandal which linked his name with that of Flimnap's wife. As a result of this scandal, Flimnap developed an inimical attitude towards his wife also. However, Gulliver succeeded in clearing the lady's name and his own too, because there was nothing at all between them. As a result, Flimnap was reconciled with his wife, though Flimnap did not soften towards Gulliver.

Critical Comments

Some of the Lilliputian customs, a source of amusement. This chapter describes the way of life of the Lilliputians. We are given some information about their learning, their laws, their customs and their manner of educating their children. There is nothing remarkable in this account though we are certainly amused to read the absurd proposition that the dead, buried with their heads downwards, would be found standing on their feet when they rise from their graves after a certain period of time. It is also noteworthy that some of the laws of this country are very wholesome and it is only because some corruptions have entered into the body

politic that employments are offered to persons who can dance well on tight ropes. Another interesting point is that children in Lilliput are not brought up or educated by their parents but are the responsibility of the State. This particular custom anticipates the system in Communist countries of today where the State has full control over the education and upbringing of the children.

An oblique reference to Walpole's wife. The scandal involving Gulliver and Flimnap's wife is an oblique reference to Sir Robert Walpole's wife, Catherine Shorter, who was inclined to flirtation and was therefore not above suspicion.

The peculiar manner of writing and its comic effect. One of the absurdities of the Lilliputians is their manner of writing which is very peculiar, "being neither from the left to the right, like the Europeans ; nor from the right to the left like the Arabians ; nor from up to down, like the Chinese ; nor from down to up, like the Cascagians ; but aslant from one corner of the paper to the other, like our ladies in England." The reference to the English ladies at the end of this description makes the account even more amusing.

Other comic ingredients in this chapter. Another amusing feature of the Lilliputian's public life is the image of Justice, in their courts of judicature. This image is formed with six eyes, two before, two behind, and one on each side. These six eyes on different sides signify circumspection. Lady Justice holds a bag of gold open in her right hand, and a sword sheathed in her left, to show that she is more inclined to reward than to punish. The account of the scandal at the court involving Gulliver and the wife of Flimnap is also quite amusing in view of the fact that, while the lady in question is only six inches tall, Gulliver is more than twelve times that height.

PART I, CHAPTER 7

Information about a secret conspiracy against Gulliver. One day, a lord from the imperial court called on Gulliver in strict secrecy. He informed Gulliver that Flimnap (the High Treasurer), Skyresh Bolgolam (the High Admiral) and a few other dignitaries, all hostile to Gulliver, had conspired against him and had prepared articles of impeachment against him for treason and other capital crimes. The visitor produced for Gulliver's information a copy of those articles of impeachment. it is crime against government

The articles of impeachment against Gulliver. On going through the documents presented by his visitor, Gulliver found that he had been charged with (1) having urinated within the precincts of the royal palace ; (2) having refused to seize the remaining ships belonging to the Emperor of Blefuscu ; (3) having held secret discussions with the ambassadors who had paid a visit to Lilliput from the court of Blefuscu to sue for peace in the court of the Emperor of Lilliput ; and (4) having now made up his mind to pay a visit to

the court of Blefuscu after receiving only a verbal licence from the Emperor of Lilliput. The articles of impeachment clearly showed that those who had prepared them wanted Gulliver to be sentenced to death on charges of treason.

The punishment proposed for Gulliver. The visitor further informed Gulliver that one of Gulliver's well-wishers had suggested that Gulliver, instead of being sentenced to death, be merely blinded in both eyes because, after all, the loss of his eyes would be no impediment to his bodily strength and because Gulliver could still continue to be useful to the Emperor even in his state of blindness. The well-wisher who had made this suggestion was Reldresal. Gulliver further learnt that the Emperor had been prejudiced against him also by being told that the expenses of feeding the man-mountain, if continued for some more time, would reduce the country of Lilliput to bankruptcy. Another piece of information which Gulliver received from his visitor was that the Empress too had instigated the Emperor against Gulliver for having adopted an obnoxious method of extinguishing the fire in her apartment.

Gulliver's escape from Lilliput. Having received this confidential information from his visitor, Gulliver thought over the matter for some time and then decided that, in view of the danger which threatened him, the most suitable course for him would be to slip away from Lilliput and take shelter with the Emperor of Blefuscu. Of course, Gulliver being a giant among pigmies could have caused a lot of destruction in Lilliput, but he did not wish to violate the vow which he had taken to remain loyal to the Emperor. Accordingly one day, Gulliver took the opportunity to steal away from Lilliput and to wade through the intervening channel in order to reach Blefuscu where he was cordially welcomed by the Emperor and his subjects. Gulliver laid himself on the ground to kiss the hands of the Emperor and Empress.

Critical Comments

A satire on court-intrigues. This chapter contains an account of the conspiracy which had been hatched against Gulliver by the high officers who had been feeling hostile to him for a long time. This account of the conspiracy is obviously a satire on court intrigues which are a permanent feature of political life in countries which are ruled by kings and emperors. Of course, much of the validity of this satire has been lost in our time when kingship and absolute monarchy have become obsolete in the world. However, the satire serves its purpose of amusing us and of giving us a glimpse of what went on at the court of George I when Sir Robert Walpole was the most influential of the politicians.

A satire on the impeachment of some Tory politicians of the time. Another important point in this chapter is that the articles of impeachment against Gulliver are intended by Swift as a satire on

the actual impeachment in 1715 of four Tory ex-ministers. These four Tories were Bolingbroke, Oxford, Ormonde, and Strafford. Bolingbroke and Ormonde escaped to France (just as Gulliver escapes to Blefuscu) and were declared traitors. The impeachment of Strafford was dropped, while Oxford was acquitted after having been kept as a prisoner in the Tower for two years.

English justice ridiculed. Swift is also mocking here at the state of English justice in general, and there may be a specific reference to the trial of Atterbury, Bishop of Rochester and one of the most formidable supporters of the Pretender.

The way paved for Gulliver's return to his native land. Gulliver's escape from Lilliput and arrival in Blefuscu pave the way for him to return to his native country before embarking on a fresh voyage.

PART I, CHAPTER 8

Gulliver,s discovery of a boat. Three days after his arrival in Blefuscu, Gulliver, in the course of his random walks, observed, several miles away, in the sea, a large boat lying over-turned. This was not a miniature boat of the kind which the Lilliputians had. It was a boat of the normal size, which could carry Gulliver over the sea in case he wanted to leave Blefuscu. The Emperor of Blefuscu had no objection to his fitting the boat for a voyage.

An urgent message from the Emperor of Lilliput for the Emperor of Blefuscu. In the meantime, an envoy came from the Emperor of Lilliput to the Emperor of Blefuscu with an urgent and important message. The envoy called upon the Emperor of Blefusçu to send Gulliver back to Lilliput on the ground that Gulliver had fled from justice and had proved himself to be a traitor. However, the Emperor of Blefuscu did not comply with the demand of the Emperor of Lilliput. Gulliver told the Emperor of Blefuscu that the best thing for him would be to leave for home instead of becoming the bone of contention between two great monarchs, especially when he had found a large boat that could carry him.

Gulliver, ready to leave Blefuscu. In about a month's time, when Gulliver had made all his preparations to leave, the Emperor and the royal family came out of their palace to bid him farewell. The Emperor presented Gulliver with a large number of gold coins and with his own picture at full length. Gulliver lay down on the ground to kiss the hands of the members of the royal family. (The people of Blefuscu were, like those of Lilliput, pigmies, only about six inches in height.)

Gulliver on board an English ship. Gulliver had stored his boat with a large number of oxen, sheep, cows, bulls, etc. to serve as food for him during the voyage. He wanted to take some of the animals alive to his own country in order to breed and propagate these animals of extraordinarily small proportions. Gulliver

would have also liked to take with him a dozen of the natives in order to be shown to his own countrymen, but this the Emperor did not allow. On the 24th September, 1701 Gulliver set sail at six in the morning. After having covered some distance from Blefuscu he caught sight of a ship and signalled to it. Gulliver was delighted to see that it was an English ship. He put the cows and the sheep (which he had brought from Blefuscu) into his coat-pockets and got on board the English ship. The captain of the ship was Mr. John Biddel, a very polite man and an excellent sailor. On the ship, Gulliver also met an old acquaintance by the name of Peter Williams who was amazed to see the cows and sheep of a small size when Gulliver produced them from his pockets.

Gulliver's re-union with his family, and his departure for another voyage. The ship touched port on the 13th April 1702. Gulliver was happy to meet his wife and children (a boy and a girl). But two months later, he decided to embark on a fresh voyage. He made satisfactory financial arrangements for his family and, after bidding them farewell, went on board a merchant-ship called "Adventure" with Captain John Nicholas of Liverpool as its commander. The ship was bound for Surat.

Critical Comments

This chapter brings to an end Part I of *Gulliver's Travels*, which deals with Gulliver's voyage to Lilliput and to Blefuscu. Gulliver's stay in Blefuscu is a very short one lasting for three days only. The Emperor of Lilliput, feeling greatly annoyed at Gulliver's escape from his clutches, sends an envoy to Blefuscu demanding that Gulliver be sent back to Lilliput. The Emperor of Blefuscu, however shows a good deal of consideration for Gulliver, and refuses to comply with this demand. At the same time, the Emperor of Blefuscu feels relieved when Gulliver tells him of his intention to leave this country also. The demand of the Emperor of Lilliputian has allegorically been interpreted to mean the English government's protest to the French government of the time against the latter's support to the Pretender. The relief of the Emperor of Blefuscu at Gulliver's departure also has a hidden meaning. Bolingbroke had joined the Pretender in France, but the Pretender, on finding Bolingbroke inconveniently realistic in assessing political events, soon dismissed him in favour of more flattering advisers.

Trivial details at the end for a realistic effect. This chapter closes with certain details pertaining to Gulliver's family and the financial arrangements he makes for them before leaving once again. Gulliver sees the family properly settled in a good house, and has the satisfaction that both his children are receiving the proper kind of education. These trivial details serve to lend a realistic quality to the narration which otherwise deals with highly improbable events, human beings only six inches high being one of the most glaring improbabilities.

PART II : A VOYAGE TO BROBDINGNAG

PART II, CHAPTER 1

The ordeals of the ship on Gulliver's second important voyage. The merchant ship called "Adventure", with Captain John Nicholas as its commander, commenced its voyage on the 20th June 1702, its destination being Surat. The ship had a very prosperous voyage till it arrived at the Cape of Good Hope where it stopped to obtain its supply of fresh water. However, as the ship was found to have developed a leak, the Captain said that they would spend the winter there. The Captain having then fallen ill, the ship could not leave the Cape till the end of March 1703. Then the ship had a good voyage till it passed the straits of Madagascar. On the 19th April, 1703 a furious storm began to blow on the sea, and the ship was driven to the east of the Molucca Islands. By the 2nd May, the sea had become calm, but the Captain warned the crew that another storm could soon be expected. The storm which now began to blow was very fierce and dangerous. However, the ship went through the ordeal successfully. On the 16th June 1703, land was sighted, and the Captain sent a few members of the crew by a boat towards the shore in order to look for fresh water on land. As Gulliver was very keen to take a look at the island which the ship had approached, he too went with the party of sailors.

Gulliver on a new island. Gulliver's curiosity had the better of him and, leaving the other sailors, he ventured into the interior of the island. When, however, he was returning to the shore, he found the boat hurrying away, pursued by a man of a huge size and stature. This man was frightfully tall and big. While the boat was able to escape from this pursuing monster, Gulliver hid himself in the fields.

A country of huge men. A little later, Gulliver saw seven other men of the same huge size coming towards him. The one who had tried to overtake the boat now proved to be the master of the fields and the other seven his servants. These seven monstrous-looking giants held reaping-hooks in their hands. They had obviously come to reap the harvest. A few moments later, the master of the field detected Gulliver lying on the ground, trying to escape notice. By contrast with these huge-looking men, Gulliver thought himself to be as small as the Lilliputians were by contrast with him. In other words, these men were many times bigger than Gulliver.

Gulliver, treated kindly by one of the giants. The master of the field now picked up Gulliver with his hand and lifted him to the level of his eyes. Gulliver was in state of panic because there was a danger that the giant might dash him against the ground any moment. However, instead of flinging him on the ground, he treated Gulliver kindly.

Gulliver taken home by the principal giant. When all the giants sat down on the ground, they began to stare at Gulliver in order to observe his movements and behaviour. Gulliver made every possible gesture to show his respect for the giants. He even took his purse containing gold coins out of his pocket and presented it to the master who was a farmer by occupation. But the master showed no interest in the gold coins ; he did not even seem to understand what those shining pieces were. Nor did those giants understand the several languages in which Gulliver spoke to them, just as Gulliver could not understand their language. After a little while, all the giants got up, and the owner of fields took Gulliver to his own house where he exhibited his discovery to his wife who screamed and ran away as a woman in England might do at the sight of a toad or a spider. However, after watching Gulliver's behaviour for some time, she was reconciled to Gulliver and by degrees became quite fond of him.

Gulliver, with the farmer's family. At meal-time, a servant brought a big dish about twentyfour feet in diameter. The farmer's wife minced a bit of meat and offered it to Gulliver who bowed respectfully to her and started eating. The youngest son in the family who was a mischievous boy of about ten years of age then lifted Gulliver by the legs and held him so high in the air that Gulliver began to tremble with fear. However, the farmer rescued Gulliver from the boy who might have done some bodily harm to Gulliver in the way children often do to birds and small animals. Just at this time the pet cat of the family leaped into the lap of the farmer's wife. This cat seemed to be three times larger than an ox, and its fierceness was a cause of great alarm to Gulliver. The mistress kept stroking and feeding the cat.

The huge woman with extraordinarily large breasts. After the meals, the nurse brought a one-year old child in her arms. On seeing Gulliver, the child began screaming so loudly that in England it could have been heard from London Bridge to Chelsea. The mother, in order to pacify the child, picked up Gulliver and offered him to the child who seized him by the middle and tried to put his head into its mouth. As the child persisted in crying, the mother felt compelled to feed it on her breast. Gulliver felt thoroughly disgusted on seeing the huge, monstrous breast of the woman which was revealed when she began to suckle the child. The breast stood prominent six feet, and was about sixteen feet in circumference. The nipple of the breast was about half of the bigness of Gulliver's head. This ugly sight made Gulliver think of the English ladies who appear so beautiful because they are of the normal human size. However, Gulliver thought that these people of Brobdingnag could not be regarded as being deformed. They were a comely race of people and they looked ugly only because of their gigantic dimensions as compared to the ordinary people of other lands.

Gulliver, attacked by two large rats. When Gulliver woke up after having slept for some time in a room which was two or three hundred feet wide and more than two hundred feet high, he was attacked by a couple of rats. These rats were of the size of a big dog, but very much more nimble and fierce. Gulliver defended himself against these terrible rats with his sword and was able to kill one of them while the other fled away. The mistress of the house was very happy that Gulliver had been able to save himself.

Answering the call of nature. Gulliver now wanted to answer the c all of nature, and he did not know where to ease himself. He tried to convey to the mistress by means of gestures, what his need was, but she could not follow him. Ultimately, however, she did understand his need. She took him to the garden outside where Gulliver "discharged the necessities of nature".

Critical Comments

Gulliver in a land of giants. This chapter describes Gulliver's arrival in a country where the human beings are of a huge size. This country is called Brobdingnag. While walking, a man here covers about ten yards at every stride. Gulliver is terribly scared on seeing the people of this country, but they do him no harm. A Brobdingnagian family treats him very kindly and keeps him in their house as a curiosity and as a pet. In this house, Gulliver has several adventures which greatly amuse us. As in the country of the Lilliputians, so here Gulliver does not understand the language of the people of this country ; nor do they understand his language. For this reason, Gulliver has to depend upon the language of gestures and movements.

Comic episodes in this chapter. The most amusing episodes in this chapter are the way in which the ten-years old son of the family lifts Gulliver by the legs and holds him high in the air ; the one-year old child trying to put Gulliver's head into its mouth ; the mother suckling the child at her monstrous breast ; and Gulliver's fight against two huge rats which attack him. The manner in which Gulliver conveys to the mistress of the house his need to ease himself is also funny. We are here naturally struck by the contrast between the people of this country and the people of Lilliput, and this contrast too constitutes one of the comic elements in this chapter. We have not yet forgotten the people of Lilliput who were diminutives, but here we come across people who are real giants in stature. Of course, it is not possible for us to believe in the existence of either of these two races of people, but Gulliver tries his atmost, by his art of narration, to lend an air of probability to the experiences which he r elates.

PART II, CHAPTER 2

Gulliver, in the charge of a nine-year old girl. The farmer, in whos e house Gulliver was now living, had a daughter who was nine

years old. This young girl became quite fond of Gulliver. She would look after him and his needs in every possible way. She would dress and undress him; she would teach him her language; and she sewed garments for him. She was a very good-natured girl. She was about forty feet high, and was thought to be rather undersized for her age. She gave him a name which in English meant "manikin"*, while he began to call her his "glumdalolitch" which in English meant "little nurse".

Gulliver on display as an object of curiosity. One day a visitor to the family made a suggestion to the farmer, which seemed to please the farmer. The suggestion was that Gulliver should be taken on a market-day to the next town and displayed to the people as an object of curiosity against a small fee. In accordance with this suggestion, the farmer carried Gulliver in a box on the next market-day to the neighbouring town, and took along with him his little daughter who was Gulliver's nurse. During the half-hour journey, Gulliver was badly shaken in his box, because the movements of the horse† were like the rising and falling of a ship in a great storm. The horse went about forty feet at every step. Arriving in the town, the farmer hired the largest room of the inn, and placed Gulliver on a stool. People were then admitted into the room to see Gulliver who was asked various questions by his nurse and who answered the questions in accordance with the instructions that the nurse had given him. At the end of the exhibition, Gulliver felt almost half dead with weariness and vexation. In the course of the exhibition, a young school-boy had thrown a hazel-nut towards Gulliver's head, but it had narrowly missed him. Had the nut hit him, it would have knocked out his brains. (The hazel-nut too was of a large size.)

Gulliver shown to many spectators in various towns. The farmer, finding how profitable such an exhibition was, resolved to take Gulliver to all the important cities of the kingdom for holding similar shows. Accordingly on the 17th August, 1703, he took leave of his wife and set out for the metropolis, taking Gulliver and Gulliver's nurse with him. The metropolis was situated almost in the middle of the country, and was about three thousand miles away from the farmer's house. The nurse carried Gulliver in a box which she had tied round her waist. The journey took ten weeks on horse-back, and Gulliver was shown to the public in eighteen large towns on the way.

Gulliver, a source of income to his master. The party arrived in the metropolis on the 26th October, 1703. The farmer took a lodging in the principal street of the city, not far from the royal palace. He then started exhibiting Gulliver to the public for a fee. Gulliver was shown ten times a day to the wonder and satisfaction of all the people. Gulliver could now speak the language of the country

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* manikin : pigmy.

† The horse, like human beings in this land, was huge in size.

tolerably well, and understood every word that was spoken to him. It was as a result of the efforts of his nurse that he had learnt the language.

Critical Comments

Gulliver, taught the language by the farmer's daughter. This chapter gives us an account of how the farmer's nine-year old daughter takes charge of Gulliver, attends to all his needs, and begins to teach him the language of this country. This girl, we are told, is about forty feet high, and is thought to be somewhat below the normal height for girls of her age.

Comic episodes. To the people of Brobdingnag, who look to Gulliver to be giants of a huge stature, Gulliver becomes an object of curiosity because of his small height and small dimensions. Gulliver now becomes a source of profit to his master because people do not mind paying admission fee in order to have a look at him. Indeed, those who have seen him once give such wonderful reports to others that the people are ready to break the doors in order to get in to see him. It is natural for an account of this kind to produce a comic effect. The horse which draws the carriage is also gigantic in size, so that Gulliver feels its movements to be like the rising and falling of a ship in a great storm on the sea. There is also the comic incident of a school-boy aiming a hazel nut at Gulliver's head, and Gulliver's having a narrow escape from being knocked down dead on the spot.

The air of realism about the narration. Incidentally, the name of the metropolis of Brobdingnag is Lorbrulgrud which in English meant "Pride of the Universe". Swift's giving us the name of the metropolis and also telling us certain dates (17th August, 1703 when the party set out for the metropolis, and the 26th October, 1703 when the party arrived in the metropolis) are circumstantial details intended to lend an air of realism to the narrative.

PART II, CHAPTER 3

Gulliver's declining health. Gulliver's health now began to decline because of the great strain to which he was subjected during the public exhibitions which were arranged by the farmer frequently. Indeed, Gulliver was now almost reduced to a skeleton.

Gulliver, bought by the Queen of Brobdingnag. After a time, reports pertaining to these exhibitions reached the royal palace. The Queen was filled with a desire to witness the novelty in the person of Gulliver. When the Queen saw him, she at once expressed a desire to buy him from his master. The Queen paid the farmer a thousand pieces of gold on the spot to obtain possession of Gulliver. Gulliver was very happy to pass into the possession of Her Majesty.

The King's reaction. The Queen showed Gulliver to her husband, the King, who was not much pleased to see him. This

King was a learned man who had been educated in the study of philosophy and mathematics. However, he could not understand how a human being of Gulliver's small size could exist on this earth. Nor could he believe Gulliver's account of how he had happened to come to this country.

The theories of three great scholars about Gulliver. The King sent for three great scholars in order to consult them about Gulliver. All the three gave different theories about how a man like Gulliver could have come into existence, but they all agreed that Gulliver could not have been produced according to the regular laws of nature because Gulliver did not possess the capacity to preserve his life either by swiftness of movement, or climbing up trees, or digging holes in the earth. After much discussion, the three scholars came to the conclusion that Gulliver was a freak of nature.

The Queen's liking for Gulliver. The King now directed the Queen to take particular care of Gulliver. At Gulliver's request, his nurse (the nine-year old daughter of Gulliver's former master) was allowed to look after him in the royal palace also. The Queen soon became so fond of Gulliver's company that she could not dine without his presence by her side. She was particularly amused to watch Gulliver eating because Gulliver could eat only very tiny bits of food as compared with the large quantities that the people of this country ate. The Queen, for instance, would chew a whole bird, bones and all, between her teeth, although a bird in this country was nine times as large as a full-grown turkey in England.

Gulliver, questioned by the King. The King also began to feel more and more interested in Gulliver's talk. He inquired from Gulliver about the people, religion, laws, government, and learning of European countries. One of the King's comments on the information given to him by Gulliver was that human grandeur must indeed be very contemptible if it could be claimed by such small insects as Gulliver. (Gulliver, because of his comparatively small size, was like an insect to the huge King.)

The tricks played by a dwarf on Gulliver. The Queen kept in her palace a dwarf who was like a pet to her. This person, though a dwarf, now began to feel jealous of Gulliver because the Queen had become more fond of the newcomer. On one occasion, the dwarf played a trick as a result of which Gulliver fell into a large bowl of cream. On another occasion, the dwarf thrust Gulliver's whole body into a bone from which the marrow had been taken out.

The flies and wasps, a cause of annoyance to Gulliver. Gulliver also felt uneasy on another account. There were too many flies in Brobdingnag. The flies here, like all other creatures, were very large, and Gulliver felt much tormented by them as they hummed and buzzed about his ears. On one occasion, the dwarf caught a number of flies and then released them suddenly under Gulliver's

nose in order to frighten him. Gulliver was also much troubled by wasps which hummed louder than the sound of bagpipes. The wasps were as large as the partridges in England.

Critical Comments

Gulliver, thought to be a freak of nature. In this chapter we learn that Gulliver is purchased by the Queen of Brobdingnag because he catches her fancy. The King, who is not much attracted by Gulliver, consults three great scholars with regard to Gulliver's diminutive height as compared with the people of his own country. The explanations which the three scholars offer to the King about Gulliver are quite amusing. One of them, for instance, thinks that Gulliver might be an embryo, or an abortive birth. This opinion is rejected by the other two who observe Gulliver's limbs to be perfect and finished. Eventually all the three agree that Gulliver is a freak of nature. In other words they cannot believe that the normal human beings inhabiting the European countries are all of the dimensions of Gulliver.

The attitudes of the dwarf, the King, and the Queen towards Gulliver. It is amusing also to read about Gulliver's quarrels with the palace dwarf who becomes jealous of him and who plays several mischievous tricks on him. The Queen becomes so fond of Gulliver's company that she cannot dine without his presence by her side. The King himself now feels great pleasure in conversing with Gulliver, and inquires about the way of life and the system of government in European countries. The King's reaction to Gulliver's account is rather contemptuous because he thinks it insulting to his own nation that people of such a diminutive size should claim a dignity and a grandeur for which they were not fit. Gulliver, however, defends his own country with great spirit, thus showing his patriotic spirit even though he is perfectly conscious of the follies and the crimes that are committed in his country by the high as well as the low.

Comic elements. Gulliver's misadventures on account of the tricks employed by the palace dwarf are, indeed, funny. His adventures with the flies and the wasps in this land are funny also because of the huge size of these insects.

PART II, CHAPTER 4

A description of the country of Brobdingnag. The country of Brobdingnag was a peninsula having mountains thirty miles high on the north-east, and the sea on all other sides. Occasionally a whale was dashed ashore, and the common people fed on it heartily because it was thought to be an excellent food. The country of Brobdingnag was well inhabited. It contained fiftyone cities, about a hundred walled towns, and a large number of villages. The metropolis, Lorbrulgrud, stood almost in two equal parts on either

side of a river which passed through it. The city had more than eighty thousand houses. The palace of the King consisted of several buildings situated over an area of seven miles.

The nauseating sight of beggars. One day Gulliver saw a horrible sight near the shops which he visited in the company of the royal governess. The sight was one of a crowd of beggars standing there. Among them was a woman with cancer in her breast, swollen to a monstrous size, full of holes, into which Gulliver could have easily entered. Then there was a man with a huge tumour in his neck, and another beggar with a couple of wooden legs, each about twenty feet high. But the most hateful sight was the lice crawling on their clothes.

A visit to the tower. Gulliver now wanted to see the chief temple of this country and particularly the tower belonging to it. Accordingly, one day his nurse carried him thither in a box. However, he came back disappointed because the height of the tower was no more than three thousand feet, and allowing for the difference between the size of these people and the size of the Europeans, this height was no great matter for admiration.

Critical Comments

Disgusting sights seen by Gulliver. This is a purely descriptive chapter in which Gulliver gives us an account of the metropolis of Brobdingnag and the various sights that he witnessed on his visits to various places. The description of the crowd of beggars in this chapter has a disgusting effect on us because of the horrible diseases from which many of them are suffering. The lice crawling on the clothes of these beggars offer a nauseous sight to Gulliver who thus describes it :

> "I could see distinctly the limbs of these vermin with my naked eye, much better than those of a European louse through a microscope, and their snouts with which they rooted like swine."

Exaggeration or under-statement ? Towards the close of the chapter, Gulliver describes the royal kitchen which is about six hundred feet high. Gulliver here says that, if he were to describe the size of the kitchen-grate and the size of the pots and kettles, the readers would perhaps not believe him and would think that he is exaggerating things. On the other hand, if his descriptions were to be read by the people of Brobdingnag, they would think that he had under-estimated the size of things in their country.

PART II, CHAPTER 5

The large apples and hailstones in Brobdingnag. One day when Gulliver was taken by his nurse into a garden, the palace dwarf mischievously shook the branches of an apple tree under which

Gulliver stood. Thereupon, a dozen apples, each of them almost as large as a barrel, came tumbling down·Gulliver's ears. One of the apples hit him on his back and knocked him down flat on his face. On another occasion when Gulliver was standing on a grassy plot, suddenly there was a shower of hailstones. These hailstones were nearly eighteen hundred times as large as those in Europe. Gulliver was badly injured by these hailstones.

Several mishaps during Gulliver's stay. On another occasion, a dog seized Gulliver with its mouth and ran straight to his master, wagging its tale, and set him gently on the ground. Luckily it was a trained dog and, because it carried Gulliver between its teeth gently, Gulliver was not hurt. On yet another occasion, a kite hovering in the sky swooped upon him and would have carried him away in its talons if he had not drawn his sword in time and taken shelter under a big tree. Once Gulliver broke his right shin against the shell of a snail. On another occasion, a linnet attacked him and he had great difficulty in defending himself.

The behaviour of the maids of honour towards Gulliver. The royal maids* of honour were very inquisitive about Gulliver and often wanted to play with him. Sometimes they stripped him naked from top to toe and laid him at full length on their bosoms. Gulliver on such occasions felt disgusted because a very foul smell came from their skins. These maids of honour felt no shame at all while undressing themselves in Gulliver's presence, because they regarded him as a creature of no consequence. The sight of their naked bodies filled him with horror and disgust. The handsomest among these maids of honour, a pleasant girl of sixteen, would sometimes place him on one of her nipples and play many tricks on him.

A criminal executed. On one occasion, Gulliver got an opportunity to see the execution of a criminal. The criminal was placed in a chair upon a scaffold erected for the purpose, and his head was cut off at one blow with a sword about forty feet long.

Gulliver's skill in rowing a boat. As the Queen made every possible effort to divert Gulliver, she also devised a method by which he could take regular exercise. This device was the provision of a pool and a boat which Gulliver could row on the water. The Queen and her ladies were agreeably entertained by Gulliver's skill and ability in rowing.

An adventure with a monkey. The greatest danger which Gulliver ever faced in this kingdom was from a monkey which carried him off and, having set him on the top of a building, began to play with him as a cat plays with a mouse. It seemed that the monkey had taken Gulliver for a young one of its own species. It was after a good deal of effort that the King's men could rescue Gulliver from the monkey. As a result of this mishap, Gulliver

* A maid of honour is an unmarried girl who attends upon the King or the Queen.

had to spend about a fortnight in bed. (The monkeys in this land were also huge like all other creatures.)

The King's disbelief. One day the King asked Gulliver what he would have done in a similar situation in his own country. Gulliver told the King that in Europe there were no monkeys except those which were brought there as objects of curiosity from other places. Gulliver also told the King that in his own country he could have properly dealt with a dozen monkeys if he had been attacked by them because monkeys there were not of the size of elephants, as was the case in Brobdingnag. However, the King laughed at Gulliver's words, because he thought that Gulliver was merely boasting of his prowess. The King's reaction made Gulliver reflect how vain it was for a man to try to honour himself among those with whom he could not compare himself because of the vast difference separating him from them.

Half sunk in cow-dung. One day while out for a walk, Gulliver fell upon some cow-dung in the path, and found himself just in the middle up to his knées. He waded through it with some difficulty and one of the attendants wiped him as clean as he could with his handkerchief. (The quantity of dung discharged by a cow at any one time must be enormous in this land.)

Critical Comments

Comic episodes. This chapter contains a number of amusing episodes, there being only one serious situation which is the execution of a criminal. Most of the episodes describe Gulliver's discomfiture because of the mishaps which befall him. All the mishaps are a consequence of the fact that Gulliver is a diminutive as compared with all the creatures and all the objects in this strange land. For instance, the apple which hits Gulliver and the hailstones which injure him are of a huge size as compared with those in European countries. Similarly the dog, the kite, and the monkey who prove to be a nuisance to Gulliver are also of huge sizes so that he cannot cope with them.

The disgusting maids of honour. The description of the manner in which the maids of honour behave towards Gulliver is also part of the fun, even though the sight of their naked bodies is disgusting to Gulliver chiefly because of the disproportion between their sizes and his own size. Gulliver also finds that a foul smell comes from the skins of these women, though this smell could not have been disagreeable to their lovers just as the smells coming from the bodies of Englishwomen are not disagreeable to their English lovers. Here Swift is evidently making fun of how lovers take no notice of the foul smells of the bodies of their sweethearts because they are blinded by passion.

The problem of disproportion. Towards the close of this chapter Gulliver makes a serious observation when he says that it is useless

for a man to compare himself with those who are widely different from him in size or in height or in moral conduct. It is, indeed, very annoying to the King of Brobdingnag to see a man of an inferior social status or inferior in respect of his intellect to put on airs of importance and compare himself with those who are far above him.

PART II, CHAPTER 6

Gulliver's efforts to please the King and the Queen. Having become a favourite with both the King and the Queen, Gulliver was now always trying to please them in various ways. On one occasion he built a chair using some of the Queen's hair (collected from her comb) as cane and made a present of it to her. On another occasion, he made a neat little purse about five feet long with the Queen's name inscribed on it in gold letters. Once he played upon a spinet* in order to please the King and the Queen with his musical performance.

Gulliver's account of the government in his own country (England). The King was a man of excellent understanding, and he one day asked Gulliver many questions about the people and the government of Gulliver's native country. Gulliver told the King about the English parliament consisting of the House of Commons and the House of Lords, the members of which were selected with great care on the basis of their intellectual ability and moral integrity. He also told the King about the English courts of justice. It was at five different sessions of several hours each that Gulliver gave to the King all this information.

The King's adverse reaction to Gulliver's account. The King, having taken down many notes from Gulliver's discourses, now asked him all kinds of questions. Many doubts and objections had arisen in the King's mind with regard to the information which Gulliver had given him. Gulliver did his best to satisfy the King's doubts, but the King was not convinced. The King's view was that the history of Gulliver's country seemed to him to be only "a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, banishments, and very worst effects that avarice, faction, hypocrisy, perfidiousness, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition could produce".

The King's low opinion about Gulliver's countrymen. The King concluded his comments on Gulliver's account of his country with the following words :

> "But, by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wringed and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that Nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

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*A spinet is a kind of musical instrument with one string.

Critical Comments

Some biting satire in this chapter. This is one of the most important chapters because it contains some essential satire on civilized mankind as a whole. After a trivial beginning, dealing with Gulliver's making a comb from the stumps of the King's hair and weaving some of the Queen's hair into a kind of cane-chair, Gulliver proceeds to give us an account of the King's reactions to the system of government and administration prevailing in England. It is in response to the King's questions that Gulliver gives him detailed information about the English parliament, the English courts of justice, and the management of the English treasury. The King is filled with many doubts, and he raises many objections to what he has heard. The King would like to know, for instance, what methods are used in England to cultivate the minds and bodies of the young English nobility, what qualifications are necessary in those who are created new lords, what arts are practised in electing members of the House of Commons, what role money plays in these elections, how much expense is involved in the citizens' seeking justice from the law-courts, how a country can run short of funds like any private individual, and what was the need of maintaining a paid army in times of peace and among a free people. When Gulliver tries to answer the King's objections, the King is not satisfied and makes very unflattering remarks about Gulliver's country. The King's view is that, in England, ignorance, idleness, and vice are the proper qualifications for a candidate to be elected to the House of Commons, that the laws in England are interpreted by those whose interest lies in perverting and confounding them, that the English institutions are blurred and blotted by corruptions. The King also says that he is not convinced by Gulliver's argument that the priests in England are prompted by piety or learning, that soldiers are honoured for their valour, that judges are respected for their integrity, and so on. The King is of the opinion that English history is nothing but a series of rebellions, revolutions, and wars, and that the bulk of English people seem to be "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin" produced by Nature.

PART II, CHAPTER 7

The King not prepared to learn the method of manufacturing gun-powder. According to Gulliver, the King had formed unfavourable opinions about English life because the King was living wholly isolated from the rest of the world and, having a narrow outlook, was not in a position to come to right conclusions about the countries of Europe. In Gulliver's opinion, the King's narrow outlook was confirmed when the King summarily rejected Gulliver's suggestion that the King should make himself more powerful by manufacturing gun-powder the recipe or formula for which Gulliver was prepared to reveal to the King. The King was horrified when Gulliver said that he knew of a method by which a destructive agent called gun-powder could be prepared. This instrument of destruc-

tion, Gulliver said, could effectively arm the King against all possible opponents. But the King bluntly said that it was shocking that an "impotent and grovelling insect" like Gulliver should entertain such inhuman ideas. The King was definitely not prepared to make use of such terrible destructive instruments as gun-powder. In the King's opinion some evil genius hostile to mankind must have been the first inventor of this instrument of destruction. The King said that he would rather lose half his kingdom than learn the secret of the manufacture of gun-powder.

No books needed on the art of government. In Gulliver's opinion which, of course, he kept to himself, the King betrayed his "narrow principles and short views" by entertaining unnecessary scruples about the use of gun-powder which could have made the King an absolute master of the lives, the liberties, and the fortunes of his subjects. The King, in Gulliver's opinion, showed a similar narrow-mindedness when, on being told about the large number of books that were written in England upon the art of government, he said that only common sense, reason, and justice and not books were needed to run a government. The King could not understand why elaborate treatises should be written on how to govern the people.

The value of productivity. The King's view was that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a piece of ground where only one grew before, did more essential service to his country than all the politicians put together.

Other features of the life of the Brobdingnagians. The learning of the people of Brobdingnag, says Gulliver, was very defective, because it was limited only to morality, history, poetry, and mathematics. These people had no conception of the measures that should be taken to promote what was useful in human life, to promote agriculture and the mechanical arts, for instance. Nor did these people have any notion of ideas, entities, abstractions, and transcendentals. In this country even to write a comment upon any law was a capital crime. Although they knew the art of printing, their libraries were not very large. The King's library, for instance, did not have more than a thousand volumes. Their style of writing was clear, masculine and smooth, but not florid ; and they avoided unnecessary words and expressions. Superfluity in expression was no part of their style. As to their military affairs, the King's army consisted of one hundred and seventysix thousand soldiers and thirtytwo thousand horses. But this army actually consisted of tradesmen in the various cities, and farmers in the countryside ; and their commanders were only the nobility and gentry who received no pay or reward. Actually there should have been no need to have an army at all, but many years before, these people had been troubled with the same disease to which the whole race of mankind is subject to : the nobles struggling to acquire power, the people struggling to attain liberty, and the King struggling to acquire absolute authority.

Critical Comments

Irony and satire in this chapter. This is another important chapter because here too we get some essential satire on some of the evils afflicting European countries. The King's humane ideas are regarded by Gulliver as showing his "narrow outlook" and prejudiced mind. When the King condemns destructive instruments like gun-powder, Gulliver attribtes the King's attitude to a "confined" education. There is, of course, irony in Gulliver's assessment of the King's intelligence. Indeed, the irony employed by Swift in this chapter is devastating. Gulliver's comment on the King's horror and shock at learning about the bloodshed and desolation that could be caused by gun-powder is that the King suffers from unnecessary scruples. This also shows Swift's use of irony. There is irony, too, in the way Gulliver describes the King's view of how a government should be run. The King is opposed to all mystery and intrigue in a ruler or a minister of the government. The King believes that common sense, reason, and justice should be the basis of all government. But the most important remark of the King is the one according to which the best servant of mankind is the man who can make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow where only one grew before. In other words, the King believes in increased production, and this is a very sensible point of view. However, Gulliver mocks at this view and there lies the irony.

PART II, CHAPTER 8

Gulliver's wish to leave Brobdingnag. The King now wanted that Gulliver should find a suitable woman for himself so that he could propagate his breed. Of course, the King desired that Gulliver should get a woman of his own size for the purpose. Gulliver was however, averse to this proposal. In fact, Gulliver now wanted to leave this country where he had already spent two years.

Gulliver, carried over the sea by an eagle and dropped. In the beginning of the third year of his stay in Brobdingnag, a strange incident occurred. The King and the Queen were making a journey through the country and they had halted in a city close to the sea-side for rest. As usual, Gu lliver was carried in a travelling-box to keep the royal couple company. It so happened that one day an eagle caught the ring of this box in its beak and flew away over the sea, carrying the box which was no burden for the bird. The eagle was of a huge size as was only to be expected in Brobdingnag. When the eagle had covered some distance through the air, it was attacked by a couple of other eagles which wanted to share the booty, with the result that the box holding Gulliver fell down into the sea. Luckily Gulliver, who was not hurt by the fall, was picked up by a passing ship, the Captain of which was an honest, worthy Shropshire man, Mr. Thomas Wilcocks.

Gulliver rescued by a passing ship. Gulliver told his whole story to the Captain of the ship, but he was not prepared to believe

Gulliver's narrative till Gulliver produced a large number of articles from his box as evidence that he had really lived among a race of giants in the land called Brobdingnag. (The Captain and his sailors were, of course, normal human beings, of the same size and dimensions as Gulliver.) The Captain thereupon agreed to take Gulliver with him to England whither the ship was bound.

Gulliver's arrival in England, and his surprise at the smallness of things there. The voyage proved to be a prosperous one. The Captain called in at one or two ports in order to get provisions and fresh water but Gulliver did not leave the ship on these occasions. Ultimately the ship arrived at an English port on the 3rd June, 1706, about nine months after Gulliver's escape from Brobdingnag. As Gulliver had no money at all, he borrowed five shillings from the Captain in order to hire a horse for a ride to his house in Redriff. When Gulliver was riding homewards, he was struck by the smallness of the houses, the trees, the cattle, and the people in his country, and began to think that he was in Lilliput again. The reason for this reaction was that, having come from a country where everything was of a huge size, he now found the ordinary objects to be too small by contrast. Such is the great power of habit. When Gulliver met his wife and children, even they appeared to him to be pigmies. It took him quite some time to adjust himself to the normal size and dimensions of objects and persons in his own country.

Critical Comments

A transitional chapter. There is nothing important in this chapter which merely describes the manner in which a lucky accident helped Gulliver to escape from Brobdingnag. The box in which Gulliver travelled with the King and the Queen is lifted by a huge eagle and flown over the sea. This mishap could have proved fatal because the eagle, after having placed the box on some rock, might have eaten up the human being inside. However, Gulliver eventually finds himself on board an English ship which carries him to his own country. This chapter is thus intended merely to wind up the narrative in Part II of the book. The chapter closes with an amusing description of how things and persons in England appear to be very small to Gulliver who has been accustomed to giants in the land of Brobdingnag.

PART III : A VOYAGE TO LAPUTA, BALNIBARBI, GLUBBDUBDRIB, LUGGNAGG, AND JAPAN

PART III, CHAPTER 1

Gulliver as a surgeon on another voyage. Gulliver had hardly stayed at home with his family for ten days when Captain William Robinson, a Cornish man, and the commander of a ship called "Hope-Well", called on him and offered him the post of a surgeon on his ship which was about to set out on a voyage to the East

Indies after about two months. Gulliver's thirst for seeing the world had not diminished in the least in spite of his past misfortunes, and so he accepted the offer.

Gulliver on a new island The ship sailed away on the 5th August, 1706, arriving at Fort St. George on the 11th April, 1707, and staying there for three weeks to refresh the crew many of whom had fallen sick. From there the ship sailed to Tonquin where the Captain decided to stay for some time ; but he gave to Gulliver a sloop and a few sailors to sail away if Gulliver so desired. After three days of voyaging, Gulliver's sloop was overtaken by a furious storm. On the tenth day of this voyage, the sloop was chased by two pirates and their men. The pirates treated Gulliver roughly and, after depriving him of all his belongings, put him on a small boat and set him adrift. Five days later, the boat touched an island where Gulliver got down.

An island below and an island up in the air. The island was all rocky. Gulliver was in very low spirits. He was feeling tired and desolate, and he wondered how miserable his end would be. After a couple of days, Gulliver suddenly perceived a huge opaque body between himself and the sun, moving forward over the island. This body seemed to be about two miles above the island, and it was moving. Gulliver was still more surprised when he saw human beings moving about on that body. A little later those human beings let down a chain from the lowest gallery of their abode. A seat had been fastened to the end of the chain. Gulliver caught hold of the chain, got into the seat, and was drawn upwards by means of pulleys. Gulliver now found himself on an island in the air, inhabited by a large number of people. Here also his first difficulty was that he did not understand the language of these strange people and that they did not understand his language either.

Critical Comments

A new marvel in this chapter : the flying island. In Parts I and II we were introduced to such marvels as human beings only six inches high and human beings more than sixty feet high, with other creatures and objects corresponding to these diminutive and enormous sizes respectively. Now, in Part III, we are introduced to another marvel, this marvel being a flying island. Having landed in a new country after his encounter with pirates, Gulliver suddenly finds overhead an island flying about two miles high in the air. This island is inhabited by men who are able to raise, or lower, or put their island into a progressive motion, just as they please. The island has the capacity also to stand almost still in the air above. There are several galleries connected with one another by means of stairs. In the lowest gallery are seen people fishing with long angling-rods. By shouting and waving, Gulliver is able to attract the attention of these flying islanders. The island descends to about one hundred yards above the spot where Gulliver stands, and he is then pulled up by means of a chain fastened to pulleys. This flying

island, as we shall learn subsequently, is a scientific wonder. Although this flying island is a product of Swift's fancy, yet it is remarkable that Swift should have been able to visualize and anticipate the aeroplanes of today, though very vaguely and crudely.

PART III, CHAPTER 2

Strange-looking people on the flying island. On alighting from the seat which he had occupied while being pulled up, Gulliver was surrounded by a crowd of people who looked at him with a feeling of wonder. These people were very strange as regards their shapes and faces. "Their hands were all reclined either to the right or the left; one of their eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the zenith."

Flappers and their function. Gulliver observed another strange feature of these people also. Many of them were followed by "flappers" or servants who carried in their hands a blown bladder fastened to the end of a short stick. The function of these flappers was to draw the attention of their masters to anything that might need their attention, because the minds of their masters were so occupied with intense speculations that they could neither speak nor listen to others without being roused by some external action. A servant had only to strike his master with the bladder on the mouth or on the ear according as the master was required to look at something or to listen to something.

Gulliver, presented to the King. When Gulliver was taken to the King, he found the monarch busy in solving a problem, and Gulliver had to wait for at least an hour before the King could pay any attention to him. The King asked many questions but, although Gulliver tried to communicate with the King, he found that neither of them could understand the other because their languages were different.

Geometrical shapes of meat and bread on the dinner-table. At dinner-time when different dishes were brought before Gulliver, he noted another strange thing. The mutton had been cut into an equilateral triangle; the beef had been cut into a rhomboid, and the pudding had been shaped into a cycloid. When some more dishes were brought, Gulliver found that the various meats and puddings had been given the shape of musical instruments like a harp, a fiddle, and a flute. The bread had been cut into geometrical figures such as cones, cylinders, and parallelograms.

Laputa, the name of the flying island. In the course of the next few days Gulliver was able to pick up the language of these strange people. He also learnt that the name of this island was Laputa which in English meant the "flying island".

An ill-made suit of clothes for Gulliver. The officials of the King ordered a tailor to take Gulliver's measurements in order to prepare

a suit of clothes for him. The tailor also behaved in a strange manner. He first took Gulliver's altitude with a quadrant ; and then, with rule and compasses, sketched the dimensions and outlines of Gulliver's whole body on a piece of paper. After six days, the tailor brought a suit of clothes which was very badly made and which was quite out of shape. The reason for this was that the tailor had made a mistake in his calculations.

The music of the spheres heard by the King and his courtiers. The King had given orders that the flying island should move to a point just above Lagado, the metropolis of the kingdom below upon the firm earth. On the following day, the King and his courtiers played on many musical instruments for several hours. Gulliver learnt that the people of this island had their ears adapted to hear the music of the spheres which was always heard at certain times when the King and his courtiers had to play on whichever instrument they liked.

Music and mathematics, the principal interests of these people. Music and mathematics were the two principal interests of these people and they were hardly concerned with anything else. Their ideas found expression through lines and figures. If, for example, they wanted to praise the beauty of a woman or any other animal, they described it by geometrical terms such as circles and parallelograms, or by musical terms. The houses on this island were badly built, without one right angle in any apartment. In fact, these people were most awkward and clumsy so far as the common actions and behaviour of life were concerned. Only in matters pertaining to mathematics and music did they show any skill. They were very bad reasoners ; and imagination, fancy, and invention were alien to them.

The fears and apprehensions of these people. These people were always in a state of disquietude, never enjoying a minute's peace of mind. Their fears arose from the several changes which they expected would take place in the heavenly bodies. For instance, they thought that the earth would, in course of time, be swallowed up by the sun or that the face of the sun would by degrees become dark and therefore give no more light to the world. Such fears made it impossible for these people even to have a sound sleep or to enjoy the normal pleasures of life.

Women, attracted by strangers because of the indifference of their own men-folk. However, the women of this island were different from the men-folk because they did not allow their minds to become obsessed by fears. The women, finding their husbands constantly occupied with their own thoughts and cogitations, turned to strangers for their entertainment. These strangers were to be found in a large number at the royal court. The strangers had come to the flying island from the continent on the earth below. The women found lovers among these strangers, and freely made love to them

because their husbands, being mentally always occupied, hardly paid any attention to them.

Critical Comments

An amusing account of the people engrossed in their abstract cogitations. This chapter describes the people of Laputa or the flying island where Gulliver now finds himself. A vein of comedy runs throughout this chapter because of the amusing manner in which the people are described. The first thing that strikes us as being funny is that these people are mentally so occupied that they pay no heed to anything around them till a servant or a flapper strikes them on the mouth or the ear with a bladder. This is evidently a satirical picture of people who think too much and who are so engrossed in abstract speculations as to lose all contact with the realities around them. The King himself belongs to this category of human beings.

An amusing account of these people's obsession with geometry and music, and of their strange apprehensions. Another comic feature of the life of these people is that their meats and puddings are cut into geometrical shapes or into the shapes of musical instruments. This is intended to ridicule the obsession of these people with only two branches of knowledge—namely, mathematics and music. These obsessions render these people awkward and clumsy so far as the common actions and behaviour of life are concerned. Then, again, the fears and apprehensions which these people harbour in their minds are also comic because they constantly think that the earth will in course of time be destroyed and that mankind will perish. It has been pointed out by some commentators that the fears experienced by the Laputan people were actually entertained by scientists in Swift's day. Newton's calculations recognized the possibility that the earth would eventually fall into the sun. Some other scientists too had similar fears.

An amusing account of the women turning to strangers for love-making. Finally, it is very funny to read that the men on this island have no leisure from their cogitations to make love to their wives who, for this reason, turn to strangers for the purpose. A very funny story is given at the end of this chapter about the prime minister's wife who gave up wealth and comfort and went down to Lagado in order to live with a deformed footman who would beat her everyday but in whose company she was happy because he could provide to her the sexual satisfaction which her own husband had been denying to her.

PART III, CHAPTER 3

A description of the flying island of Laputa. The flying island was exactly circular, with a diameter of about four miles and a half. The bottom of the island consisted of one even regular plate of adamant. Above it lay several minerals, and over all of them

was a coat of rich mould ten or twelve feet deep. At the centre of the island was a hollow from where the astronomers descended into a large dome situated at a depth of a hundred yards beneath the upper surface of the adamant. In this cave were twenty lamps, continually burning. But the greatest curiosity about this island was a loadstone of a huge size, six yards in length and three yards in thickness. The entire fate of the island depended on this loadstone or magnet which was held in position by a very strong axle of adamant passing through its middle. By means of this loadstone, the island was made to rise and fall, and move from one place to another. However, the flying island had its limitations. It could not move beyond the extent of the King's dominions below on the earth. Nor could it rise above the height of four miles.

The achievements of the astronomers of Laputa. The loadstone was under the care of certain astronomers who from time to time gave it such positions as the King directed. They spent most of their time in observing the heavenly bodies through their extraordinary telescopes which could magnify things to a much greater extent than the telescopes in Europe. These astronomers had been able to make discoveries beyond those made by European astronomers. These astronomers had made a catalogue of ten thousand fixed stars ; they had discovered two satellites revolving about Mars ; and they had observed ninetythree different comets.

The King's subjects in the dominions below on the earth. The King could have become the most powerful monarch in the universe if his ministers had joined him in his enterprises. The King could destroy the towns and cities below on the earth in case the people there revolted against him. But many of the ministers owned estates in the towns below, and so they could not have agreed to any such step on the part of the King. Three years before Gulliver's arrival here, the people of a city below on the earth had revolted against the authority of the King, but the King had to yield to those people because he could not take the extreme step against them in view of the attitude of his own ministers.

Critical Comments

Experiments of the Royal Society ridiculed. In this chapter Gulliver gives us an elaborate account of the structure of the flying island of Laputa and the manner in which it moved about in different directions or stood still. Obviously the people of Laputa were scientifically more advanced than European scientists. The astronomers of Laputa had also made greater discoveries than those of European astronomers because of the superiority of Laputan telescopes. However, it is more likely that Swift is here making fun of the researches and experiments of the Royal Society of England. Swift's account of the movement and navigation of the island is based on the theories of William Gilbert's *De Magnete* (1600).

An allusion to the relationship between England and Ireland. The King of Laputa does not have any direct contact with the subject country below on the earth. In the case of a rebellion below, the King can destroy life and property by flinging huge stones from above on the rebellious city or town. As a last resort, he can crush everything below by lowering the island down upon the earth. However, the ministers would oppose such a step because they own propetry below on the earth. All this seems to be a satire on the English system of administration especially with regard to the Ireland of the time. The English government ruled Ireland from a long distance, and was thus not in direct touch with the Irish subjects. In other words, the English government was cut off from the Irish people, though some of the English politicians held property in Ireland.

Attack on repressive laws. The reference to the "hovering" of the island has been interpreted as a veiled attack on the repressive laws in restraint of trade which England had enacted to keep Ireland in subjection.

The historical basis for the rebellion against the Laputan King. The rebellion of the people of one of the cities against the Laputan King has been interpreted as an allegorical account of the successful resistance of Ireland to William Wood's half-pence. In 1722 William Wood had paid a lot of money to an influential lady (the Duchess of Kendal) for a patent to mint copper half-pence and farthings for Ireland. However, when the new coins began to circulate, people protested against their poor quality, and they also protested because the Irish people had not been consulted in the matter. Swift at that time began to write letters attacking the new coins. Eventually, in August 1725 the patent granted to William Wood was withdrawn. The Laputan King's yielding to his rebellious citizens evidently refers to the English government's withdrawing the patent from William Wood.

An allusion to the Act of Settlement of 1701. Again, at the end of this chapter we are told that neither the King of Laputa nor his two elder sons were permitted to leave the island. This refers to the Act of Settlement (1701) which provided that the English King could only leave the country with the consent of Parliament, though this clause was repealed at the request of George I in 1715. George I's many prolonged visits to Hanover had caused much popular resentment.

PART III, CHAPTER 4

Gulliver's desire to leave Laputa. Although Gulliver was not ill-treated on the island of Laputa, yet he felt himself too much neglected and therefore he wanted to leave. During his two months' stay there, he could hold conversations chiefly with women, tradesmen, flappers, and court-pages.

Gulliver, allowed to leave on the recommendation of a friendly lord. There was a great lord at the court through whose influence Gulliver was able to get the King's permission to leave the island. It was on the 16th February that Gulliver took leave of the King and the court. The King gave two hundred pounds as a present to Gulliver, and the great lord, who had recommended his case to the King, gave him an equal amount of money as a present. The lord also gave him a letter of recommendation to a friend of his in Lagado, the metropolis of Balnibarbi, whither Gulliver now wanted to go.

Gulliver, received kindly by Munodi in Lagado. On arriving in Lagado, Gulliver felt quite happy to find himself on firm ground again after having stayed on the flying island. He contacted the great man for whom he had a letter of recommendation. This man was called Munodi. He was a person of the first rank and had been for some years the governor of Lagado though he had been relieved of this post for "insufficiency". However, the King still treated him with great affection.

Munodi's account of the introduction of certain futile schemes in Balnibarbi. Munodi gave Gulliver considerable information about Balnibarbi and the people of this land. Among other things, Munodi told Gulliver that about forty years before certain persons had gone up to Laputa either upon business or for diversion and that they had stayed there for five months or so. Those persons on their return to Lagado had expressed a dislike for the management of everything in Balnibarbi and, under the influence of their stay in Laputa, had tried to introduce certain new schemes with regard to the arts, sciences, and mechanics in Balnibarbi. They had also established an Academy of Projectors in Lagado and had then established similar academies in other cities. In these academies, the professors devised new rules and methods of agriculture and buildings, and new instruments and tools for all trades and manufactures whereby they expected one man to do the work of ten, and to build big buildings in a short time with materials so durable as to last for ever without repairing. However, Munodi also pointed out that none of the projects of these people had yet achieved any results so that the whole country now lay in a state of neglect, with the houses in ruins and the people without food or clothes. Munodi himself had continued to follow old methods and that, for this reason, he had made many enemies in the kingdom. But Munodi had been able also to preserve his estate in its original form.

Critical Comments

Gulliver's first impressions of Lagado. Gulliver now leaves Laputa and arrives in Lagado, the capital city of Balnibarbi. We are given a brief account of the conditions prevailing in the continent of Balnibarbi. The people in the streets of Lagado walk fast,

look wild, with their eyes fixed, and are generally in rags. Gulliver also finds, that although the soil of this country is excellent, there is no grass or any other crop growing. The houses here are in a state of ill repair, and the people have an expression of misery and want on their faces.

An allusion to the Prince of Wales. The great lord through whose influence Gulliver was allowed to leave the island of Laputa has been identified with the Prince of Wales, later George II, in whom the Tories placed hopes of better days. The Prince of Wales lacked enthusiasm for the musical and scientific interests of his father's court and that is why he is partly thus described :

> "There was a great lord at court, nearly related to the King, and for that reason alone used with respect. He was universally reckoned the most ignorant and stupid person among them. . . . . He had so ill an ear for music that his detractors reported he had been often known to beat time in the wrong place. . . . ."

The country of Balnibarbi in a state of ruin. Gulliver learns from Munodi that, under the influence of the court of Laputa, some people in this country had introduced what they called reforms but what proved to be meaningless projects. The result of these so-called reforms is that the country is in a state of ruin.

The historical counterpart of Munodi. The man called Munodi has been identified with Viscount Middleton who was Lord Chancellor of Ireland at that time and who, although a Whig, was opposed to William Wood's half-pence. But it is also possible that, in portraying Munodi, Swift had Bolingbroke in mind. Another possibility is that Harley served as a model for the portrayal of Munodi.

Impractical projects. By the new schemes which were introduced into Lagado, Swift may have meant the new agricultural methods in vogue in England in the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is noteworthy that the various projects introduced by the persons who had visited Laputa are impractical. One of the projects is that "all the fruits of the earth shall come to maturity at whatever season we think fit to choose, and increase an hundred-fold more than they do at present".

PART III, CHAPTER 5

A visit to the Academy of Projectors in Lagado. In Lagado, Gulliver paid a visit to the Academy of Projectors where he was received very kindly by the warden and where he met a number of persons in charge of various projects.

A project for extracting sunbeams from cucumbers. The first man whom Gulliver met was of a meagre build, with a long beard. This man had been engaged for the last eight years upon a project for

extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers. The sunbeams were to be put into tubes hermetically sealed, and then let out to warm the air in cold weather.

A project for restoring human excrement to its original food. Another man at the Academy had been employed for a long time in experiments aimed at restoring human excrement to its original food, by separating the several parts, removing the tincture which it receives from the gall, making the odour exhale, and scumming off the saliva.

A new method for building houses. One of the Projectors was endeavouring to calcine ice into gun-powder. A most ingenious architect had contrived a new method for building houses, by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation. Then there was a blind man who was engaged in mixing colours for painters and who claimed that he could distinguish the colours by his sense of touch or smell.

A new agricultural device, and a new method of obtaining silk. One Projector had found a device for ploughing the ground with hogs in order to save the charges of ploughs, cattle, and labour. However, it had been found by experiment that the expense and the trouble relating to this project had been very great and that no crop had grown as a result of that device. In one of the rooms of the Academy, Gulliver found that the walls and the ceiling were all covered with cobwebs. The Projector there explained that he was trying to obtain silk from the webs woven by spiders. This Projector regretted the mistake which the world had been making so long in breeding silk-worms when plenty of spiders were available.

The research carried out by a physician. A great physician at the Academy claimed that he could cure colic by performing contrary operations with a large pair of bellows having a long ivory muzzle. This physician demonstrated his experiments on a dog, though Gulliver did not see any tangible result. The only thing that happened was that the dog made a violent discharge of wind and then died on the spot..

The experiments conducted by the universal artist. One of the Projectors was regarded at the Academy as the universal artist. He had fifty men working under him. Some of these men were condensing air into a dry tangible substance; others were softening marble for pillows; and still others were petrifying the hoofs of a living horse. This universal artist was also trying to breed sheep which would have no wool upon their bodies.

Production of books and the reforms in language. In an other department of the Academy, some Projectors had developed a method by which even an ignorant person could produce books in philosophy, poetry, politics, law, mathematics, and theology. Three professors of the school of languages were busy in their projects to

shorten discourse by cutting polysyllables into one, and leaving out verbs and participles. These professors had also a scheme for entirely abolishing all words. It was their view that, since words are only names for things, it would be more convenient for all men to carry with them such things as were necessary to express the particular business about which they were to talk.

A new method of teaching at the mathematical school. At the mathematical school, the professor taught his pupils in accordance with a novel method. The proposition and demonstration were written on a thin wafer with an ink made of a cephalic tincture. This wafer a student was to swallow upon a fasting stomach, and then for three days following he was to take nothing except bread and water. As the wafer was digested, the tincture mounted to the student's brain, carrying the proposition along with it.

Critical Comments

A satire on the Royal Society. This chapter was written by Swift as a satire on the kind of work the Royal Society in England was engaged upon in those days. In other words, the grand Academy of Lagado is meant to represent the Royal Society. The various experiments that are being made at the Academy are the most absurd conceivable. In fact, we are greatly amused by the stupidity and folly of the Projectors who are busy finding methods to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to convert human excrement into its original food, to build houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, to obtain silk from cobwebs, to produce books on various subjects by the use of a machine and without having to use one's brain, and so on. The projects are a sheer waste of time and labour. Indeed, we wonder whether anybody in his right mind would conceive any of the projects that have been enumerated here. And yet it is said that the Royal Society at that time was actually engaged in some such projects as have been ontlined by Swift in this chapter.

PART III, CHAPTER 6

Some of the schemes being developed at the school of political projects. Gulliver also visited the school of political projects at the Academy of Lagado. The professors at this school were busy developing a large number of schemes. For instance, they had a scheme for persuading kings to choose favourites on the basis of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue ; for teaching ministers to be guided by the public good ; for rewarding merit and ability ; for choosing for employment persons who were properly qualified ; and so on.

A project to keep legislators in a fit mental condition. There was a most ingenious professor who proposed that on the eve of the meeting of a legislative assembly, certain physicians should feel the pulse of each legislator at the close of each day's debate for three consecutive

days, and then, on the basis of their diagnosis, administer to each legislator the kind of medicine necessary to keep him in a fit mental condition so that he should not talk any nonsense during the rest of the session.

Medicines to stimulate the memory of the favourites of kings. It was also suggested by one professor that the favourites of kings should be given suitable medicines to stimulate their memories so that they should not forget their promises to the public.

Some other novel schemes. Another suggestion was that every legislator, after stating his opinion and arguing in defence of it, should be compelled to give his vote directly contrary because, if that was done, the result would always be in the interests of the public. A method to bring about a reconciliation between the views of two opposing parties in a country had also been developed. The method consisted in the interchange of the two halves of the brains of the leaders of each party by means of a surgical operation. If the two half brains were allowed to debate the matter between themselves within the space of one skull, they would come to a mutual understanding.

Ways of raising funds through taxation. Methods had also been devised for raising funds through taxation without upsetting the members of the public. One method was to impose a tax upon vices and follies. The amount of the tax in this case was to be collected on the basis of the judgment of a jury consisting of the neighbours of the man to be taxed. Another tax was to be calculated on the basis of the opinion that a citizen had about his own merit or ability. The higher the opinion a man had about his own merit or ability, the higher would be the tax.

Self-assessment taxes. The highest tax was to be imposed upon men who were the greatest favourites of the other sex, and the assessments according to the number and natures of the favours they had received. Wit, valour, and politeness were likewise proposed to be largely taxed in the same manner, by every person's giving his own word for the quantum of what he possessed. The women were to be taxed according to their beauty and their skill in dressing, to be determined by their own judgment.

Investigation of plots and conspiracies. Another professor showed to Gulliver a large paper of instructions for discovering plots and conspiracies against the government. According to these instructions, the diet of all suspected persons, their times of eating, upon which side they lay in bed, with which hand they wiped their posteriors, and similar other matters had to be investigated.

The kind of people living in Tribnia (or Britain). Gulliver told his informant that in the kingdom of Tribnia, by the natives called "Langden", the bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers,

witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, and so on. The plots in that kingdom were usually the work of those persons who wanted to raise their own characters of profound politicians. Gulliver also told this professor that some other methods known as acrostics and anagrams were also used by the people in that country.

Critical Comments

Satire on politicians and others. This chapter continues with the account of the Academy of Lagado. Some more absurdities are here mentioned as being the subject of investigation by the professors there. Swift here ridicules the politicians for the way in which they behave and suggests that physicians should administer to each of them "lenitives, aperitives, corrosives, palliatives, laxatives", according to the requirements of a particular case. He also makes fun of the favourites of princes for forgetting the promises they make to the people. The suggestions for imposing taxes on the people also show Swift's bitterness against human beings for their self-conceit and for their exaggerated opinions of themselves.

The use of irony. Swift employs the weapon of irony in the beginning of this chapter when he tells us that some of the professors were proposing schemes for teaching ministers to consult the public good, for rewarding merit and ability, for choosing candidates properly qualified to hold certain posts, and so on. What Swift means to say is that normally all these rational procedures are ignored by the authorities in a country. Towards the end of this chapter, Swift castigates the people of his country for all kinds of obnoxious activities. The word "Tribnia" is an anagram for Britain, while "Langden" is an anagram for England.

A contemporary allusion. There is also a reference in this chapter to the trial of Bishop Atterbury for Jacobite intrigues in 1722. Certain papers were produced at this trial to prove his part in the intrigues, and it was alleged that these papers had been found in his close-stool.*

PART III, CHAPTER 7

Gulliver's visit to the island of Glubbdubdrib. Gulliver now left Lagado in order to go to Japan on his way back home. However, on arriving at the port of Maldonada, he learned that there was no ship in the harbour bound for Luggnagg from where he had decided to proceed to Japan. In Maldonada he happened to meet a gentleman of distinction who knew him somewhat. This gentleman suggested that, as a ship bound for Luggnagg would not be ready for at least a month, it would be a good idea for Gulliver to pay a visit to the nearby island of Glubbdubdrib. That

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* *i.e.* commode

gentleman and a friend of his offered to accompany Gulliver on this short trip.

The island of magicians. The word "Glubbdubdrib" meant the island of magicians. This island was governed by the head of a certain tribe, all members of which were magicians. This tribe married only among themselves, and the eldest in succession became the governor. The governor was always a man whose skill in magic enabled him to summon anyone from the kingdom of the dead and command the services of those whom he summoned for twentyfour hours.

Dinner with the governor. On arriving at this island of Glubbdubdrib, Gulliver and his companions sought an interview with the governor, and the interview was granted. Gulliver told the governor of his various voyages and adventures. Gulliver was also entertained by the governor to dinner where a number of ghosts served the meals and waited at the table. (As already indicated, the governor had the power to summon the ghosts of dead people and command their services for twentyfour hours.)

Gulliver's conversations with the ghosts of ancient dead men. The governor also asked Gulliver to suggest the names of any dead men to whom he would like to talk. Gulliver said that he had a desire to see Alexander the Great at the head of his army just after the battle of Arbela. At a movement of the governor's hand, the ghost of Alexander appeared in a large field outside. Alexander was then summoned into the room. In answer to a question by Gulliver, Alexander said that he had not been poisoned to death as books of history said, but that he had died of a fever caused by excessive drinking. Next, Gulliver expressed a desire to talk to another great conqueror, Hannibal. The ghost of Hannibal told Gulliver that he did not have a drop of vinegar in his camp and that the historical account of his crossing the Alps was wrong. Gulliver was then able to talk to the ghosts of Caesar, Pompey, Brutus, and several other ancient personalities.

Critical Comments

A satire on the pointlessness of historical inquiry. This chapter gives us an account of Gulliver's departure from the capital city of Lagado, and his arrival on the island of Glubbdubdrib which was the island of magicians. In this strange country, Gulliver was able to talk to the ghosts of many dead persons, among them the ghosts of conquerors like Alexander, Hannibal, and Caesar. Of course, it is hard for us to believe that the ghosts of the dead can be summoned by any magician, but there are many other improbable episodes and events too in this book. In any case, Swift's object in introducing the ghosts of the dead men, some of whom contradict the historical accounts of their lives, is to show the futility and pointlessness of much historical inquiry. In other words, Swift is

here satirizing meaningless historical research into certain details. According to a tradition, Alexander was poisoned to death by his cup-bearer, but Alexander's ghost tells Gulliver that Alexander had died of excessive drinking. Likewise, Swift disbelieves the story that Hannibal was able to split rocks with vinegar.

The ghosts of celebrated personalities summoned. Some of the personalities whose ghosts are summoned include a group of persons celebrated for their public virtues. These persons are Lucius Junius Brutus, Socrates, Cato, and Sir Thomas More. Gulliver feels uplifted by conversing with the ghosts of these people.

PART III, CHAPTER 8

Homer and Aristotle, also summoned. Gulliver had a desire to see some other personalities of the past also. Accordingly, at his request, the governor summoned Homer and Aristotle at the head of all their commentators and critics whose number was very large. The governor also summoned Didymus, Eustathius, Descartes, and Gassendi. In the course of his talk, Aristotle freely admitted his own mistakes in natural philosophy, and explained that he had made those mistakes because he had proceeded in many things upon conjecture, as all men must do.

The seamy side of distinguished families. Gulliver spent five days in conversing with all these and other ancient learned personalities. He also saw many of the ancient Roman emperors. He prevailed upon the governor to call up the cooks of Eliogabalus. Gulliver next requested the governor to summon a dozen or so of the modern kings of Europe, along with their ancestors for eight or nine generations. Gulliver was much disappointed when he found that some of the kings had a barber, two fiddlers, and a low-ranking clergyman among their ancestors. Gulliver was also able to trace on this occasion the particular features, by which certain royal families were distinguished, to their originals. By these means he also found how cruelty, falsehood, and cowardice became the characteristics by which certain families were distinguished as much as by their coats of arms. He learnt, too, who first brought the small-pox into a noble family. Nor did he feel much surprised by this, because he saw that some of the women in those high families had married low-class people like valets, coachmen, and pickpockets.

Some other discoveries made by Gulliver. By his interrogation of the dead, Guillver also found how the world had been misled by prostitute writers to attribute the greatest victories in war to cowards, the wisest counsel to fools, and sincerity to flatterers. Gulliver further discovered how a whore had been able to govern a country through her influence over her powerful lover in the senate. An army general confessed to Gulliver that he had won a victory purely by his cowardice and ill conduct. Gulliver was also

enabled to find that perjury, oppression, fraud, and sycophancy had played a great part in moulding the course of history. On the contrary, the services of persons who were really sincere and loyal to their monarchs had never been rewarded or even recognized.

Critical Comments

Bitter satire in this chapter. This chapter continues the account of Gulliver's stay on the island of Glubbdubdrib and his interviews with the famous dead. The chapter contains some of the bitterest satire in this book. Swift here ridicules some of the greatest philosophers, monarchs, and rulers. He also ridicules historians whose books of history contain many unauthenticated versions of events. The commentators and critics of Homer and Aristotle are ridiculed for having grossly misrepresented these two great authors to the world. One philosopher points out that new systems evolved by scholars and thinkers were only temporary fashions which would soon go out of vogue. This seems to be a reference to Newton's scientific theories to which Swift did not attach much importance. Swift also ridicules men and women of great families who had married persons of the lowest classes, thus introducing inferior blood into their families.

An attack on false greatness. Swift also ridicules the historians who often fabricate anecdotes and episodes to explain certain historical occurrences. Swift becomes very bitter in his attack on the so-called great men who, on being summoned by the magician-governor, confess by what shameful methods they had risen to greatness. Here is part of the satire :

> "But when some confessed they owed their greatness and wealth to sodomy or incest, others to the prostituting of their own wives and daughters, others to the betraying their country or their prince ; some to poisoning, more to the perverting of justice in order to destroy the innocent : I hope I may be pardoned if these discoveries inclined me a little to abate of that profound veneration which I am naturally apt to pay to persons of high rank."

Such passages show the moral indignation of the author. The remark about prostituting wives and daughters may be an oblique reference to the Duke of Marlborough whose rise at the royal court was said to date from the time he delivered his sister up to the future James II.

PART III, CHAPTER 9

A warm reception at Luggnagg. After having added to his knowledge through his interviews with the famous dead, Gulliver took leave of the governor of Glubbdubdrib and returned to Maldonada from where, after a fortnight's waiting, he boarded a

ship for Luggnagg. On arriving at Luggnagg, Gulliver had to lick the dust before the foot-stool of the King there because that was the custom. Anyone who wanted to appear before the King had to crawl upon his belly and lick the floor as he advanced. Accordingly, Gulliver carried out the ritual in order to meet the King. On getting close to the royal throne, Gulliver had also to utter the following words in which he was instructed beforehand : "May your Celestial Majesty outlive the sun, eleven moons and a half!" Of course, Gulliver had to speak these words in the language of that country and not in English. The King was greatly pleased with Gulliver's visit, and he ordered his officials to look after Gulliver properly and to show him every courtesy. Gulliver stayed three monthsin this country, and was very hospitably treated.

Critical Comments

Satire on the arbitrariness of ings. In this brief chapter we learn that Gulliver visits Luggnagg where in order to meet the King he has to lick the floor. Although licking the floor was intended as a gesture of reverence and servility to the King, yet there is a satirical purpose in Gulliver's telling us that, when the King wanted to put any of his courtiers to death in a gentle manner, he used to sprinkle a poisonous powder on the floor so that the courtier, while licking the floor, got poisoned and died soon afterwards. Swift is here attacking the arbitrariness of the monarchs of those days and their whimsical nature.

PART III, CHAPTER 10

Immortal persons in Luggnagg. The people of Luggnagg were polite and generous, even though they were not without their share of that pride which is peculiar to all eastern countries. One day Gulliver was asked by a highly-placed person if he had seen or met any of the immortals of this land. Gulliver was told that there were some persons in this country who were immortal. These immortal persons were called Struldbruggs. Gulliver naturally thought these people to be very fortunate in being absolutely exempt from the fear of death.

Benefits that Gulliver would like to reap from immortality. Gulliver was then asked what he would do if he had been immortal. Gulliver replied that he would first of all make himself extremely rich ; he would then apply himself to the study of arts and sciences in order to become most learned ; and finally he would record the behaviour and actions of all the important rulers and statesmen and would in this way become a living treasury of knowledge and wisdom and even the oracle of the nation.

The misery resulting from immortality. But there was a surprise in store for Gulliver. He was told that the immortals of Luggnagg were not so fortunate as Gulliver imagined them to be. In fact, the immortals were miserable because they longed for death which

did not come to them. Old age and the infirmities which come with old age made these people most wretched. They were not only peevish, morose, and vain, but incapable of friendship and dead to all natural affection. Whenever they saw a funeral, they lamented and deplored the fact that, while others attained peace of mind by dying, they themselves were condemned to everlasting misery because they could not die.

The terrible spectacle presented by the immortals. Gulliver was then shown a group of these immortals and he found that they presented the most mortifying sight he had ever beheld. The women among them looked even more horrible than the men because, besides the usual deformities of extreme old age, they had acquired an additional ghastliness in proportion to their number of years. On seeing this terrible spectacle of immortality, Gulliver no longer wanted to become immortal.

Critical Comments

A satire on the human desire for immortality. This chapter contains a satire on the desire of human beings for an everlasting life on this earth. The theme of the human desire for immortality is not a new one. Tennyson too afterwards dealt with it in his well-known poem, *Tithonus*. Immortality does not mean everlasting youth also. A man, if immortalized, would go on becoming older and older and suffer from more and more weaknesses, infirmities, and ailments, and Gulliver actually finds this when brought face to face with the Struldbrugs. In the first part of this chapter Gulliver expresses his delight at the possibility of immortality because immortality means freedom from "the weight and depression of spirits caused by the continual apprehension of death". Gulliver also visualizes the endless addition which an immortal human being can make to his wealth, to his learning, and to his capacity for research, discovery, and invention. It is only when he actually beholds a group of immortals that he is disillusioned.

PART III, CHAPTER 11

The King's permission to Gulliver to leave Luggnagg. Gulliver now obtained the permission of the King of Luggnagg to leave this country in order to go to Japan from where he wanted to proceed to his native country. The King was pleased to give his permission to Gulliver, and honoured him with a letter of recommendation to the Emperor of Japan. The King presented him with a large quantity of gold at the time of Gulliver's departure.

Gulliver's arrival in Japan. Gulliver left Luggnagg on the 6th May, 1709, and after about three weeks landed at a Japanese port. The letter of recommendation which he had brought from the King of Luggnagg proved very useful to him in Japan where the Emperor exempted him from the ceremony of trampling upon the crucifix which every Christian was compelled in this country to perform.

Gulliver here posed to be a Dutchman now wanting to return to Europe. The Dutch were the only Europeans permitted to enter Japan.

His return to England. With the help offered to him by the Emperior of Japan, Gulliver arrived at Nangasac* on the 9th June, 1709, after a very long and troublesome journey. There he was able to board a Dutch ship called "Amboyna" which was bound for Amsterdam. Gulliver arrived at Amsterdam on the 16th April, 1710, via the Cape of Good Hope. From Amsterdam he soon afterwards sailed to England where he arrived on 20th April, 1710, after an absence of five and a half years. From the port he went straight to Redriff where he found his wife and childern in good health.

Critical Comments

An air of realism. This is another transitional chapter which informs us of Gulliver's departure from Luggnagg, his arrival in Japan, his voyage from a Japanese port to Amsterdam on board a Dutch vessel, and then on to the Downs in England. As on previous occasions, Gulliver gives us several circumstantial details in order to lend an air of realism to his account. As part of the technique of lending probability to the account, Gulliver gives us the various dates on which he left or arrived at various places.

Contemporary allusions. A reference is also made to the contemporary regulation in Japan requiring all European travellers arriving there to trample upon the crucifix. The Japanese were in those days intolerant of Christians and so they tried to humiliate Christian travellers by forcing them to trample upon the crucifix which they regard as sacred. Gulliver is able to evade this regulation. The name "Amboyna", the Dutch ship which Gulliver boards in order to go to Amsterdam, is significant. It has been suggested that, in giving this name to the ship, Swift intended to remind his readers of the massacre of Englishmen by the Dutch at a place called Amboyna in the East Indies in 1623.

PART IV : A VOYAGE TO THE COUNTRY OF THE HOUYHNHNMS

PART IV, CHAPTER 1

Departure on a new voyage. Gulliver stayed with his wife and children for about five months whereafter he again got ready for a fresh voyage. He accepted an offer made to him by the Captain of a ship called "Adventure". The ship sailed from Portsmouth on the 7th September, 1710.

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* *i. e.*, Nagasaki, a Japanese city.

Gulliver in an unknown country. In the course of this new voyage, Gulliver was attacked by the members of the crew of this ship and bound hand and foot. Most of the members of this crew had previously been pirates, and now they took charge of the ship, threatening to throw Gulliver into the sea if he put up any resistance. On the 9th May, 1711, the ruffians put Gulliver down on the sea-coast and then sailed away, leaving him alone to fend for himself. Gulliver found himself in a new country about which he knew nothing at all.

Gulliver's antipathy to the strange creatures seen by him. After resting for a little while on the sea-shore, Gulliver walked into the interior of the country, expecting to find savages who would probably be hostile to him. As he walked, he saw many tracks of human feet, and some of cows, but mostly of horses. After a while, he beheld several animals in a field, and one or two of the same kind sitting on the branches of trees. Their shape was very strange and deformed. Gulliver felt somewhat apprehensive on seeing them, and concealed himself to observe them better. He found that those beings could climb the trees as effortlessly as a squirrel, and that they could leap and jump with great agility. The females among them were not so large as the males. The breasts of these females hung between their fore-feet, and often touched the ground as they walked. On the whole, Gulliver had never beheld in all his travels so disagreeable an animal as these creatures. He developed an immediate antipathy towards them.

Saved by the arrival of a horse on the spot. Having been spotted by one of these strange creatures, Gulliver now felt somewhat apprehensive and drew his sword. But the next moment he found himself surrounded by a large number of them. Gulliver was now facing a grave danger. But the very next moment, the crowd of those strange creatures ran away in great confusion, and Gulliver found that they had run away at the approach of a horse.

The strange behaviour of two horses. Gulliver now stood gazing at the horse which had arrived there. The horse too stood gazing at Gulliver. Then another horse appeared there, and the two horses greeted each other in a formal manner by striking each other's right hoof. The two horses also neighed several times, as if they were speaking to each other in a language of their own. Gulliver was amazed to see such actions and behaviour of these horses.

The words "Yahoo" and "Houyhnhnm" spoken by the two horses. The behaviour of these horses was so orderly and rational that Gulliver began to think that they were magicians who had changed themselves into brutes with some particular purpose. He therefore spoke to them in his own language and appealed to them for help in his distress. The two horses, after listening to his words without understanding him, communicated with each other through their own language by neighing several times. One word which Gulliver

Gulliver represent the whole community of mankind. He is a dramatic device

caught from their neighing was "Yahoo", and having caught this word he too uttered it in a loud voice. The horses seemed pleased that this strange creature had caught a certain word uttered by themselves. They then pronounced another word which Gulliver learnt after several efforts. This word was "Houyhnhnm". One of the two horses then left while the other made certain signs which meant that Gulliver should accompany him to where he would take him.

Critical Comments

A new country, and new kinds of inhabitants. A new voyage begins in this chapter. This voyage takes Gulliver to another strange country where he first sees certain animals which fill him with disgust and then certain horses which give evidence of some intelligence. The behaviour of the horses shows them to be animals with an extraordinary power of understanding. These horses also seem to be capable of communicating with one another through their own language. This chapter also introduces two new words—"Yahoo" and "Houyhnhnm". Evidently "Yahoo" describes the disgusting creatures whom Gulliver sees first, while "Houyhnhnm" refers to the horses whom Gulliver has met soon afterwards. Thus there are surprising developments in this chapter.

PART IV, CHAPTER 2

The Yahoos, filthy and detestable, though physically resembling human beings. The horse now escorted Gulliver to his abode which was a building made of timber stuck in the ground. Gulliver found that there were three nags and two mares sitting on the ground upon their hams. He also found some more horses busy doing some kind of domestic work. The horse who had led Gulliver to this place seemed to be the boss. Gulliver also saw a few of those creatures whom he had seen first in this country. He found these creatures eating the flesh of some animals. They seemed to be subservient to the horses which were in command of the position. The horses referred to these other creatures as "Yahoos"; and Gulliver found that there was a good deal of resemblance between the bodies of the Yahoos and the bodies of human beings. But Gulliver found the Yahoos to be most filthy and detestable.

Gulliver, entertained by the horses. The horses were now trying to teach Gulliver their own language which Gulliver was able to pick up slowly. The problem of food for Gulliver was solved by his pointing to a cow, which meant that he would like to drink the cow's milk, and his being served with milk in earthen vessels by the horses. Afterwards, Gulliver sometimes caught a rabbit or a bird and, after boiling its flesh, fed himself with it. He was also able to make butter from the milk. The horses also made suitable arrangements for Gulliver's stay.

Critical Comments

Several surprises in this chapter. This chapter contains even more surprises for us than the preceding chapter. The behaviour of the Houyhnhnms shows them to be not only very intelligent but capable of communicating with one another through a language of their own. As Gulliver does not understand their language, some of them undertake to teach him this language. Gulliver is hospitably treated by the hosts in whose dwelling he is now housed.

Human beings (Yahoos) inferior to horses (Houyhnhnms). One of the surprises is that Houyhnhnms, who are actually horses, are superior beings as compared to the Yahoos who are, in respect of their physical appearance, absolutely like human beings. In fact, the point of the satire here is that human beings, as represented by the Yahoos, are mentally and morally inferior to the horses as represented by the Houyhnhnms.

Gulliver's condemnation of the Yahoos. Gulliver's reaction to the Yahoos (namely, human beings) in this strange country is most unfavourable. He describes the Yahoos as abominable and he is both astonished and horrified on seeing the physical resemblance between them and persons of his own race. Gulliver also finds that some of the Yahoos are working in the service of the Houyhnhnms. When a Houyhnhnm throws a piece of rotten flesh to a Yahoo, the latter devours it greedily. This is how Gulliver expresses his feelings about the Yahoos :

> "Yet I confess I never saw any sensitive being so detestable on all accounts ; and the more I came near them, the more hateful they grew, while I stayed in that country."

Swift's very concept of horses being superior to human beings shows his cynicism and misanthropy.

PART IV, CHAPTER 3

The favourable impression created by Gulliver on the chief Houyhnhnm. Gulliver's principal endeavour now was to learn the language which his master, one of the Houyhnhnms, and his children and servants were keen to teach him. They all treated him as a brute animal but of a better kind than most other brutes, and worth teaching. They found in Gulliver some marks of a rational being which they did not find in the Yahoos. In fact, the master was inclined to regard him as a Yahoo (because of the physical resemblance between him and the Yahoos), but Gulliver's capacity for learning, his politeness, his gentleness, and his cleanliness astonished the master because these qualities were not at all to be found in the Yahoos.

Gulliver's understanding of the language of the Houyhnhnms. In about ten weeks' time, Gulliver was able to understand much of the language of the Houyhnhnms, and in three months he was able

fully to understand it. In answer to his master's questions Gulliver gave him a fairly detailed account of who he was and how he had happened to come to this country. Gulliver found that among the Houyhnhnms there was no word for "lying" or "falsehood". This meant that these beings never lied or told a falsehood and, in fact, had no notion of lies and falsehood.

The Houyhnhnms representing the perfection of nature. Gulliver learnt also that the word "Houyhnhnm" in this country's language meant a "horse", and that it also conveyed the idea of "the perfection of nature". In other words, the Houyhnhnms were supposed to represent perfection among animals. The Houyhnhnms looked upon Gulliver as a wonderful Yahoo who had learnt to speak like themselves and who showed some signs of possessing the rational faculty.

Reasons for wearing clothes in Gulliver's country. One of the things about Gulliver which surprised the Houyhnhnm, in whose dwelling he was now living, was that Gulliver wore clothes. As neither the Yahoos nor the Houyhnhnms themselves nor any other animal wore any clothes, Gulliver's clothes occasioned much surprise in the master. Gulliver then explained why people in his country wore clothes. The master was surprised to learn that the people of Gulliver's country wanted to cover their bodies with clothes because nakedness was a matter of shame to them.

Gulliver's account of some other features of the life of his countrymen. As the master felt a good deal of curiosity about the race of people to whom Gulliver belonged, he questioned Gulliver on many points. Gulliver told the master many facts about the life of the people of his country. Gulliver also told the master that in his country human beings like himself were the only governing, rational animals, and that in this country he was much surprised to see the Houyhnhnms act like rational beings. He also said that he could not account for the degenerate and brutal nature of the Yahoos who, in physical appearance, thoroughly resembled the human beings in his country.

Critical Comments

The big difference between the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. The chief development in this chapter is that Gulliver picks up the language of this country and is now able to communicate with Houyhnhnms, and especially with his master whose guest he is. The wide difference between the Yahoos (representing the human race) and the Houyhnhnms (representing the perfection of nature) is further emphasized in this chapter. The Yahoos are brutal, unteachable, and inclined to mischief. As for the Houyhnhnms, they are morally so good that there is no word in their language for a lie or a falsehood, which means that the very notion of falsehood does not exist among them.

Surprises for both Gulliver and his host. The master is surprised to learn that the people of Gulliver's country should want to cover their bodies from a sense of shame. The master cannot understand why nature should teach human beings to conceal what nature has given. Gulliver, on his part, is surprised that the Houyhnhnms in this country act like rational beings and that the Yahoos, who resemble human beings physically, are degenerate and brutal in their behaviour.

PART IV, CHAPTER 4

Gulliver's account difficult for the Houyhnhnms to believe. The master felt very uneasy to hear the accounts that Gulliver gave him about the people of his country because Gulliver's account was difficult to believe from the master's point of view and because, at the same time, doubting and disbelieving were little known among the Houyhnhnms. In fact, the master did not understand such expressions as "lying" and "false representation".

Gulliver's account of the way horses were treated in his country. The master asked Gulliver if they had any Houyhnhnms in their country. Gulliver replied that they had a large number of Houyhnhnms (meaning "horses") in their country and that human servants were employed to feed them and keep them neat and tidy. The Houyhnhnms in their country, Gulliver went on to say, were very strong, swift, and industrious, though, when they became old and useless, they were discarded or sold for small sums of money. Gulliver also said that the hoofs of the horses in their country were shod with iron in order to preserve the hoofs from being broken on the stony ways on which the horses had often to travel and carry human beings on their backs. The master felt insulted on being told that Houyhnhnms (or horses) were used in Gulliver's country to carry people on their backs. The master felt even more insulted on learning that most of the Houyhnhnms or horses in Gulliver's country were castrated in order to make them more tame and gentle. to

The master's criticism of Gulliver and Gulliver's countrymen. The master, while regarding reason or the rational faculty as the supreme virtue, refused to believe that the Yahoos (or human beings) in Gulliver's country could be endowed with reason. The master, however, recognized the difference between Gulliver and the other Yahoos in so far as Gulliver was more clean and not so deformed as the Yahoos. At the same time, the master found much fault with many parts of Gulliver's body. He criticized the flatness of Gulliver's face, the prominence of Gulliver's nose, and Gulliver's eyes for being situated directly in front, with the result that Gulliver could not, like a Houyhnhnm, look on either side without turning his head.

Gulliver's description of the vices prevalent among his countrymen. As the master was very inquisitive about Gulliver and his

condition of human being.

origin, Gulliver told him that he was born of honest parents in an island called England, that he had been trained as a surgeon whose trade was to cure diseases and wounds in the body, that his country was governed by a female who was known as the Queen. Gulliver also told the master that many people in his country were ruined by litigation, that many spent all the money they had in drinking, gambling, and debauchery, that many had been guilty of murder, theft, robbery, forgery, rape, sodomy, and so on. The master was surprised to learn that so many vices existed in Gulliver's country. Gulliver explained that these vices were due to the human desire for wealth and power, and were the results of lust, malice, and envy. The master was not able to fully comprehend these matters.

Critical Comments

The master unable to comprehend Gulliver's account of things. The treatment of the horses by human beings or Yahoos in Gulliver's country fills the master with great indignation. In this country, Houyhnhnms or the horses are supreme, while the Yahoos are their slaves. The Houyhnhnms possess reason, while the Yahoos here are irrational brutes. But the situation in Gulliver's country seems to be just the reverse, and the master therefore cannot understand it.

The want of reason in human beings. The reversal of the roles of horses and human beings in this country is part of Swift's satirical purpose. Swift's main purpose is to expose the evils that infect human society and he here does so by attributing to horses certain qualities which would normally be expected in human beings but which are lacking in human beings. The main quality that we would expect in human beings is reason or the rational quality, but it is precisely this quality which the horses in this country possess and in which the human beings in this country as well as in Gulliver's country are lacking. Thus the satire gains in pungency and effectiveness. When Gulliver gives the master a catalogue of the evils afflicting many of his countrymen who had been forced to flee from their country, the master is simply amazed because he cannot understand the need of practising the vices which Gulliver has enumerated.

PART IV, CHAPTER 5

Causes of war in European countries. Gulliver now gave to his master an account of the Revolution under the Prince of Orange, and the long war between England and France in which about a million of Yahoos (*i.e.*, human beings) had been killed. Gulliver also explained the causes of war in European countries. Sometimes war was due to the ambition of kings, and sometimes it was due to the corruption of ministers. Differences of opinion led to the loss of millions of lives. Then Gulliver spoke of those "beggarly" kings who, unable to make war by themselves, hired out their soldiers to richer nations.

The master's reaction to war and the weapons of war. The master pointed out that in view of these causes, which led to war in European countries, Gulliver could not claim that his countrymen possessed the faculty of reason. The master also expressed his surprise that so many lives had been lost in wars. Thereupon Gulliver told him of the numerous weapons of war which the European nations employed for destructive purposes. The master, on hearing about these deadly weapons and the havoc which they wrought, was filled with an abhorrence for the whole human race.

Litigation in England, described by Gulliver. Gulliver then told the master about the law-suits that were fought in English courts where lawyers argued on behalf of their respective clients, each lawyer claiming that only his client had a just case. Gulliver also told the master that the judges who presided in those courts themselves were not guided by the strict principles of justice and often had other motives when they delivered their judgments. Often there were long delays in the settlement of law-suits, so that it might take thirty years to decide whether some property left to a man by his ancestors for six generations belonged to him or to a stranger who had only based his claim on flimsy grounds.

Critical Comments

A satire on kings, politicians, lawyers, and judges. This chapter contains bitter satire on kings, politicians, lawyers, and judges. Swift is evidently opposed to war. That is why Gulliver depicts war as something extremely ruinous. The causes of war as analyzed by Gulliver show how rulers are prompted to fight by ulterior motives. Swift mocks at the differences in opinion which lead to conflicts. Such differences are so trivial that the conflicts which results from them are simply surprising :

> "Difference in opinions hath cost many millions of lives : for instance, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh ; whether the juice of a certain berry be blood or wine ; whether whistling be a vice or a virtue . . . . Neither are any wars so furious and bloody, or of so long continuance, as those occasioned by difference in opinion, especially if it be in things indifferent."

Sometimes one king fights with another on account of a fear that the other would fight with him first. Sometimes a war is started because the enemy is too strong and sometimes because the enemy is too weak. Sometimes our neighbours want the things which we have, or have the things which we want. Poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud ; and pride and hunger will always come into conflict. Thus Swift gives us a masterly analysis of the various causes behind wars.

A vivid account of the destruction caused by wars. Similarly, he gives a very vivid and moving account of the destruction that war causes :

Ships sunk with a thousand men, twenty thousand killed on each side ; dying groans, limbs flying in the air, smoke, noise, confusion, trampling to death under horses' feet ; flight, pursuit, victory ; fields strewed with carcasses left for food to dogs, and wolves, and birds of prey ; plundering, stripping, ravishing, burning, and destroying.

PART IV, CHAPTER 6

The power of money in Gulliver's country. Continuing his account of the way of life in England, Gulliver told the master how money was used there, and what material it was made of. He also explained the value of the metals in his country and informed the master that, when a Yahoo or a human being in England had acquired a considerable quantity of money or metals, he was able to purchase the finest clothing, the best houses, large areas of land, the most costly foods and drinks, and also have his choice of the most beautiful women. Gulliver went on to say that the rich men in his country enjoyed the fruits of the poor men's labour and that the number of poor people was vastly bigger than the number of the rich.

Wine-drinking, prostitution, and the greedy doctors. Gulliver further told the master that people in his country drank wine in order to forget their troubles and to get rid of their fears but that drinking wine also had harmful effects upon the people. He also informed the master that people in his country often ate when they were not hungry and drank when they were not thirsty. The prostitute female Yahoos in his country often contracted venereal diseases which were then transmitted to others. There were physicians who claimed to cure these and other diseases but the physicians were more bent upon making money than on curing the maladies of the people. The physicians often employed methods which, instead of curing the sick, aggravated the ailments.

The character of the chief minister in Gulliver's country. Gulliver then gave the master some more information about the political life in his country. He said that the prime minister in his country was a person wholly free from joy and grief, love and hatred, pity and anger, and that he was a person with a violent desire for wealth, power, and titles, and with no inclination ever to tell the truth about any matter. A man rose to the position of a chief minister by various methods by using his wife, daughter, or sister to promote his interest ; by betraying or undermining his predecessor ; or by a display of furious zeal in public assemblies against the corruptions of the court. The monarch generally appointed a chief minister who was most submissive and subservient to the monarch's will. A chief minister always tried to preserve himself in power by bribing the majority of the members of a legislative assembly or a senate. The ministers who worked under him were persons who excelled in insolence, lying, and bribery.

Marriage for money. Gulliver further told the master that young English noblemen were brought up from their childhood in idleness and luxury, and that they generally married women for the money which they could bring as dowry even if these women were otherwise most unsuitable.

Critical Comments

A satire on politicians and physicians. This chapter contains a bitter satire on the English life of the time, but it is applicable to the conditions which prevail not only in England of today but almost everywhere else in the world. Money is still the ruling passion of the people everywhere ; the rich people still enjoy the fruits of the poor men's labour. Physicians everywhere still aim at making money rather curing the sick. Indeed, disease has become a vested interest and a source of profit to the physicians. Likewise, Gulliver's exposure of the obnoxious methods used by politicians to become ministers and chief ministers shows the dishonesty and the complete lack of scruple which are the prominent features of political life everywhere.

Bitter denunciation. The following passage is a bitter denunciation of the conditions prevailing in Gulliver's country at that time :

> "Hence it follows of necessity that vast numbers of our people are compelled to seek their livelihood by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating, pimping, flattering, forging, gaming, lying, fawning, hectoring, voting, scribbling, star-gazing, poisoning, whoring, canting, libelling, free thinking, and the like occupations."

Here is another specimen of Swift's satire :

> "That a weak diseased body, a meagre countenance, and sallow complexion are the true marks of noble blood ; and a healthy robust appearance is so disgraceful in a man of quality, that the world concludes his real father to have been a groom or a coachman".

In these lines, the author is ridiculing persons of the upper classes who pay no attention to their health which, on account of their idle and luxurious way of life, gets wrecked. The health of the upper classes suffers also because of bad matrimonial alliances, a rich man often looking for a rich woman to marry even if she is weak in constitution and not likely to bear healthy children.

PART IV, CHAPTER 7

The excellent qualities of the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver was greatly impressed by the many good qualities he found in the Houyhnhnms. In fact, the example of these excellent horses filled him with a complete detestation of all falsehood or concealment, because these quadrupeds were great lovers of truth and had no notion of lying

or falsehood. Gulliver developed such a love and respect for the Houyhnhnms that he decided to stay on this country for ever and never to think of returning to his native land. But fate had decreed otherwise.

The master's adverse view of Gulliver and Gulliver's countrymen. The master had developed a somewhat mixed attitude towards Gulliver. He recognized the fact that Gulliver did have the faculty of reason to some extent, but that he was lacking in the strength and agility of a Yahoo, that he could neither run fast nor climb trees as the Yahoos could do. In other words, the master looked upon Gulliver as a superior kind of Yahoo because of his rational faculty, but a Yahoo nevertheless. The master also found fault with the government and the laws of Gulliver's country because sufficient importance was not attached in that country to reason or the rational faculty which was essential for proper government.

The Yahoos' love of shining stones ; their gluttony and weakness for drink. The master then told Gulliver about the way of life of the Yahoos in this country. The Yahoos, he said, were extremely fond of certain shining stones which they tried to collect wherever they found them and then hide them so that others should not take away those stones. The master said that he now realized that this love of shining stones proceeded from the same avarice which Gulliver had attributed to the people of his own country. Often it happened that when two Yahoos were fighting with each other for the possession of a shining stone, a third Yahoo took advantage and carried it away from them both. The master also said that one of the odious habits of the Yahoos was to eat everything that came their way, whether herbs, roots, berries, the rotten flesh of animals, or all these mixed together. The Yahoos also loved to drink the juice of a certain root which produced the same effect on them as liquor produced on the people of Gulliver's country.

The Yahoos' diseases and the treatment thereof. The master further informed Gulliver that the Yahoos were the only animals in this country subject to any diseases. The cure for their diseases consisted of a mixture of their own dung and urine forcibly put into their mouths and thrust down their throats.

The character of the leader among the Yahoos. A ruling Yahoo or a leader of a group of Yahoos was a creature more deformed in body and mischievous in disposition than any of the others. The leader had usually a favourite whose job was to lick his master's feet and posteriors and drive the female Yahoos to the leader's dwelling. This favourite was always the object of great hatred by the whole group and he therefore always kept close to his leader. However, when the leader discarded this favourite, the latter was treated by the other Yahoos in a very degrading manner. All the Yahoos, male and female, then came in a group and discharged their excrements upon him from head to foot.

The coquetry and lewdness of female Yahoos. The master then described to Gulliver the behaviour of female Yahoos. A female Yahoo would often stand behind a bush and lure a male Yahoo to some sheltered place whither the male was bound to follow her. On such occasions the female Yahoo gave out a most offensive smell. From this account Gulliver understood that the female Yahoos in this country were no different from the women in his own country and that lewdness and coquetry were common to all womankind.

Critical Comments

The similarities between the Yahoos and the human beings. After a brief tribute which is paid by Gulliver to the race of Houyhnhnms, this chapter contains a most disgusting account of the habits of the Yahoos. A reference is made to the Yahoos' love of shining stones (*i.e.*, diamonds, rubies, sapphires, emeralds, etc.), their gluttony, their love of intoxicating drinks, the tendency of the leader among them to favour a particular individual who danced attendance upon him and gratified all his whims, and the lustful nature of the female Yahoos. The whole of this account is, of course, meant as a satire on the human race. All the vices attributed to the Yahoos are precisely the vices afflicting mankind everywhere and in all ages. Human beings are avaricious, and have a craving to possess diamonds and other precious stones. Human beings are gluttonous. Human beings become addicted to intoxicating liquors. Human beings love flattery and favour sycophants. The women employ all kinds of cunning methods to entrap the males in order to satisfy their lust. Of course, there is some exaggeration in this account as there must be in all satire, but the underlying truth in this analysis cannot be doubted. The major portion of this chapter is thus a satire on all mankind.

Human beings worse than the Yahoos. At the end of this chapter, Gulliver hints that human beings are morally even worse than the Yahoos. Human beings, he says, have some unnatural appetites from which Yahoos, according to the master's account, are free.

PART IV, CHAPTER 8

Gulliver, alert against the danger of the Yahoos attacking him. Gulliver had many opportunities of watching the behaviour and actions of the Yahoos, though he never went very close to them because there was always a danger of their attacking him as they had done on the first occasion when he had landed in this country. Whenever Gulliver wanted to go near a place where Yahoos lived, he would take with him a guard provided to him by the master. The guard too was, of course, a horse.

The Yahoos, unteachable and perverse. Gulliver found the Yahoos to be the most unteachable of all animals, and having a perverse disposition. He found them to be cunning, malicious,

treacherous, revengeful, and cowardly. The Houyhnhnms made use of the Yahoos for performing various labours in the fields. The Yahoos could swim from their very infancy like frogs, and were able to continue long under water where they often caught fish.

A female Yahoo's lustful desire for Gulliver. One day when Gulliver had taken off all his clothes and was bathing in a river, a female Yahoo suddenly rushed towards him and caught him in a close embrace. Gulliver raised an alarm and was rescued by the horse which used to act as his escort and his guard. Obviously the female Yahoo, seeing Gulliver who resembled the Yahoos in physical appearance, had been overcome by her lustful passion and wanted Gulliver to satisfy it.

The supremacy of reason among the Houyhnhnms. The Houyhnhnms were endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues. Their grand principle was to cultivate reason and to be wholly governed by it. The result was that there were no controversies and disputes among them, and reason always prevailed.

The cardinal virtues of the Houyhnhnms. Friendship and benevolence were the two principal virtues among the Houyhnhnms. These excellent beings preserved decency and politeness in the highest degree, but they never observe any ceremonies.

Population control among the Houyhnhnms. The Houyhnhnms were not excessively fond of their colts or foals which were always brought up in accordance with the dictates of reason. When a female Houyhnhnm had produced one of each sex, she stopped having sexual intercourse with her consort because she did not wish to have any more offspring. This caution was necessary to prevent the country from being overburdened with numbers.-

Other virtues of the Houyhnhnms. Among the Houyhnhnms, strength was chiefly valued in the males and attractiveness in the females. There was no question of any such thing as courtship, love, dowry, etc. The main concern was to preserve the race from degenerating by proper mating. Another aspect of their life was that they never violated the conditions of marriage and were never guilty of disloyalty or unchastity. Temperance, industry, exercise, and cleanliness were the virtues inculcated among the young ones of both sexes.

Athletic contests. Four times a year the young Houyhnhnms gathered to show their proficiency in running, leaping, and other feats of strength or agility, where the winners were rewarded with songs made in praise of them.

Periodical meetings of representatives. Every fourth year, a representative assembly of the whole nation was held for about five or six days. At this gathering the representatives discussed the conditions prevailing in every district and inquired whether there was any excess or shortage of hay or oats or cows or Yahoos.

Wherever there was any shortage, it was made up by unanimous consent.

Critical Comments

A contrast between two kinds of beings. This chapter gives us a contrasted picture of the life and habits of the Yahoos and the life and habits of the Houyhnhnms. The Yahoos are described as being despicable creatures, and Gulliver refers to one of their youngsters as the "odious vermin", a phrase which had previously been used* for the entire human race. The lustful nature of the female Yahoos is especially emphasized.

The Houyhnhnms as models for human beings. The good qualities of the Houyhnhnms are depicted in such a way that the Houyhnhnms become models for human beings to emulate. The Houyhnhnms attach the greatest importance to reason or the rational faculty, with the result that there are no disputes and wranglings among them. Friendship and benevolence are the two principal virtues among them. The implication is that human beings should try to acquire these virtues.

Lessons in population control and eugenics†. Another thing that human beings have to learn from the Houyhnhnms is the control of population. Population control is a lesson which has not yet been learned by our own country although, according to Gulliver, this lesson was known to horses in the eighteenth century. Similarly human beings are expected to learn the laws of eugenics from these Houyhnhnms. The horses in this country know how to preserve their race and to prevent it from degeneration, while we human beings have scanty ideas about this matter.

The spirit of cooperation. Finally, we have to learn the spirit of cooperation from the Houyhnhnms who see to it that a shortage of any commodity in any part of the country is quickly made up. Swift here seems to have anticipated socialistic trends in human society.

PART IV, CHAPTER 9

A suggestion for the extermination of the Yahoos. One of the grand assemblies of the Houyhnhnms was held during the period of Gulliver's stay in their country, about three months before his departure. The question discussed at the assembly was whether the Yahoos should be exterminated from the face of the earth in view of the fact that the Yahoos were the most filthy, noisy, and deformed animals which nature had ever produced, and that they were also the most mischievous and malicious. Several speakers at the assembly denounced the Yahoos as obnoxious beings. However, Gulliver's master said that he was not in favour of such a drastic step as the extermination of the Yahoos.

*At the end of Part II, Chapter 6, the expression was used by the King of Brobdingnag.

†Eugenics is the science of race-improvement.

A suggestion to castrate the young Yahoos. Gulliver's master told this assembly that he had heard of a custom, prevailing in the country from where Gulliver had come, of castrating horses when they were young in order to render them tame and incapable of reproducing their species. The master suggested that they should adopt this method of castration in the case of their own country so that, in course of time, the whole species would come to an end without their having to resort to the extreme method of destroying the Yahoos by some violent method. He also suggested that in the meantime the Houyhnhnms should cultivate the breed of asses who would in all respects prove more valuable than the Yahoos.

More facts about the life of the Houyhnhnms. As already stated by Gulliver, the Houyhnhnms were a race of beings wholly governed by reason, and naturally disposed to every virtue. They were subject to no diseases and therefore had no need of physicians. They calculated the year by the revolutions of the sun and the moon, but did not divide the year into weeks. Their poetry was excellent and was characterized by appropriate similes and minute as well as exact descriptions. The subjects of their poetry were usually friendship and benevolence, or the praises of those who were winners in races. The buildings which they erected, although very crude and simple, were quite comfortable.

No grief or mourning after a death. The Houyhnhnms died only of old age, unless a particular individual died of some injury received in an accident. Their friends and relations expressed neither joy nor grief at their deaths, nor did the dying individual express the least regret at leaving the world. They generally lived to the age of seventyfive years. Another noteworthy point was that the Houyhnhnms had no word in their language to express anything that was evil.

Critical Comments

A bitter and scathing satire on the human race. The vicious nature of the Yahoos (*i.e.*, of the human race) is here further emphasized. The Yahoos are regarded as being so evil-minded and malicious that a suggestion is put forward by some of the Houyhnhnms that the Yahoos should be completely exterminated. However, this extreme course is not adopted and the method of castration about which Gulliver had spoken to his master is decided upon by Houyhnhnms to deal with the Yahoos in their country. The satire on the human race here becomes very bitter and scathing.

More tributes paid to the Houyhnhnms. Some more tributes are paid to the Houyhnhnms in this chapter. Just as the Houyhnhnms had no word for lying or falsehood in their language so they have no word to express anything else that is evil. They are naturally disposed to every virtue, and they are wholly governed by reason. However, we cannot avoid the feeling that there is an element of absurdity in Swift's or Gulliver's description of the Houyhnhnms' way of life. For instance, we are told that their poetry

is excellent and deals with the lofty subjects of friendship and benevolence. That the horses should be capable of writing poetry is manifestly preposterous. However, we should remember that we are reading an allegory, and that the Houyhnhnms are not to be literally regarded as horses.

PART IV, CHAPTER 10

The far-reaching influence of the Houyhnhnms' way of life on Gulliver. Gulliver was now living happily among the Houyhnhnms. In this country there was no danger at all of the treachery or inconstancy of a friend or of any injury from a secret or open enemy, because the society of the Houyhnhnms was totally free from such evils. Gulliver also had opportunities of accompanying his master in the latter's visits to other Houyhnhnms and benefiting from the conversations which took place between them. The subjects of these conversations generally were friendship, benevolence, order and economy, the high role of reason, and the excellences of poetry. Gulliver would feel impressed by the virtue and wisdom of the Houyhnhnms on such occasions. In fact, Gulliver had now even begun to imitate the manner of talking and the manner of walking of the Houyhnhnms.

Gulliver to be expelled from the country of the Houynhunms. One day his master sprang a big surprise on Gulliver. The master told Gulliver that at the last assembly of the Houyhnhnms it had been decided that Gulliver, being a member of the race of Yahoos, should not be permitted to continue living in the company of Houyhnhnms for ever. Gulliver felt very grief-stricken to hear this, and he fell into a swoon. On coming back to his senses, Gulliver said that even death would have been preferable to the punishment of expulsion from the society of the Houyhnhnms. But the master explained that, although he had a great liking for Gulliver, he could not allow him to continue living there and that he could give him just two months more during which he should make arrangements to leave.

Gulliver's departure. Gulliver did not know where to go because he was not aware of the exact location of the country in which he was now living. However, as he was under an obligation to quit, he built for himself a kind of canoe and, after bidding a touching farewell to his master and other dignitaries, he sailed away from the shore.

Critical Comments

The life of the Houyhnhnms free from all evils. Once again Gulliver describes the almost ideal life which the Houyhnhnms lived in their country. Among them Gulliver too has been feeling most happy and carefree. This is how Gulliver describes the life of bliss which he has been leading in this country :

"I had no occasion of bribing, flattering, or pimping, to procure the favour of any great man or of his minion. I wanted no fence against fraud or oppression ; here was neither physician to destroy my body nor lawyer to ruin my fortune ; no informer to watch my words and actions, or forge accusations against me for hire : here were no gibers, censurers, backbiters, pick-pockets, highwaymen, house-breakers, attorneys, bawds, buffoons, gamesters, politicians, wits, splenetics ; tedious talkers, controvertists, ravishers, murderers, robbers, virtuosos, no cheating shop-keepers or mechanics, no pride, vanity, or affectation ; no fops, bullies, drunkards, strolling whores, or poxes".

This passage is a masterly summing up of the evils which exist in civilized human society and which were completely absent from the realm of the Houyhnhnms.

Gulliver's hatred for himself. Gulliver has now developed a feeling of disgust for his fellow human beings whom he also regards as Yahoos as the Houyhnhnms do. In fact, when he happens to look at his own reflection in a lake or a fountain, he turns away his face in horror and from a hatred of himself. He has developed so much hatred for his own race that he has begun to imitate the gait, gesture, and voice of the Houyhnhnms.

Another attack on the human race. The decision of the Houyhnhnms to expel Gulliver is yet another attack on the human race. The Houyhnhnms consider it beneath their dignity to allow Gulliver, a Yahoo, to continue to live among them indefinitely.

PART IV, CHAPTER 11

Arrival in another country. Gulliver left the land of the Houyhnhnms on the 15th February, 1715 in the morning. Having sailed away without knowing whither he was going, he touched land after several weeks. He was afraid of venturing far into this new country because he did not know what kind of people lived there. He stayed on the sea-coast for three days. On the fourth day, he was attacked by a group of naked men and women who wounded him with arrows. It was with great difficulty that he escaped from them.

Picked up by a ship. Gulliver now tried to sail away in his canoe and soon afterwards saw a ship which picked him up from his canoe. The sailors on this ship were Europeans and they spoke to him in Portuguese. Gulliver replied to their questions in the tones and accents of the Houyhnhnms, and they began to laugh at his way of speaking which resembled the neighing of a horse. On his part, Gulliver thought their manner of speaking to be as monstrous as if a dog or cow should speak in England.

Gulliver's reluctance to return home. The Captain of this Portuguese ship was a man called Pedro de Mendez who showed every possible courtesy to Gulliver, though Gulliver remained resentful and sullen. Gulliver was not at all happy to have come across people belonging to a race which he had begun to hate. In fact he did not even wish to return to his own country, but the Captain was bent upon taking him thither.

Gulliver, back in England. On the 5th November, 1715, the ship arrived at Lisbon. For a few weeks the Captain kept Gulliver in his own house. Then on the 24th November 1715 Gulliver boarded an English ship and sailed for England. It was on the 5th December, 1715 that Gulliver landed at an English port and went to his house at Redriff on the same day.

Gulliver's disgust with his own family. Gulliver's wife and family received him with great surprise and joy. But, strange to say, Gulliver was filled only with hatred, disgust, and contempt on seeing them. After his stay with the Houyhnhnms he had begun to hate the human race to such an extent that he could not tolerate the sight of even the members of his own family. When his wife kissed him, he felt so horrified that he fainted, and remained in an unconscious condition for almost an hour.

The companionship of two young horses. Gulliver started writing an account of his travels and his strange experiences five years after his return to his country and his home. During the first year he could not endure his wife or childern in his presence, the very smell of them being intolerable. With the money that he was able to save, Gulliver soon bought two young horses whom he treated very kindly and whom he regarded as his true companions. To the very day of his writing the present account, he has been conversing with these horses for at least four hours every day.

Critical Comments

Gulliver's return home under pressure. This chapter contains an account of Gulliver's return to his own country after having gone through a couple of adventures in the course of his voyage. He almost got killed on the sea-shore where he first landed, but luckily was able to escape from the savages who had attacked him. It is due to the special efforts made by the Portuguese Captain, Pedro de Mendez, and the pressure that this Captain exerted upon Gulliver that Gulliver agrees to return to his own country.

Gulliver's reaction to his reunion with his family. The manner in which Gulliver describes his reaction to the members of his own family is funny no doubt, but it also has a rather disgusting effect upon us. Gulliver's reaction to his family would seem to show that he has been completely de-humanized. Are we to infer that he has been raised to a higher level than human beings or that he has lost

his essentially human character? At the end of this chapter Gulliver tells us that he talks to his horses for four hours every day and that they understand him tolerably well. He also tells us that these horses live in great amity with him and in great friendship to each other. This is the limit of absurdity.

PART IV, CHAPTER 12

Gulliver's aim in writing this account of his travels. Gulliver now tells us in this concluding chapter that he has given his readers a faithful history of his travels extending over a period of sixteen and a half years. His aim in writing this account was to make his readers wiser and better and to improve their minds by telling them what he had experienced. Whoever reads of the virtues of the Houyhnhnms, as described by him, cannot fail to feel ashamed of his own vices. Gulliver further says that he has written this account without any monetary aim and without seeking any praise from anybody.

Much to be learnt from the countries discovered by Gulliver. It was suggested to Gulliver that he should report his discoveries of new lands to his government which could then try to acquire those lands as its own colonies and dominions. But Gulliver's view was that instead of conquering those new lands, discovered by him, his government should send delegations of English people to those countries in order to learn from those people the virtues of justice, truth, courage, chastity, friendship, benevolence, and loyalty which prevailed among those people and especially among the Houyhnhnms.

Pride, the most hateful vice. Gulliver then bids farewell to his readers and says that he will be spending his time now in his own speculations in his garden at Redriff and will contemplate those excellent virtues which he had witnessed among the Houyhnhnms. He will also try to instruct the Yahoos of his own family, even though the smell of the members of his family still continues to offend him. Gulliver says that he could reconcile himself to the Yahoos in his family if they were to remain content with those vices and follies which nature has afflicted them with. He can tolerate a lawyer, a pickpocket, a fool, a gambler, a politician, a whoremonger, a physician, a traitor, and so on. But when such persons add to their vices the vice of pride, he can no longer tolerate them. In other words, pride in Gulliver's opinion is a most hateful quality. The Houyhnhnms, who lived under the Government of Reason, were completely free from the evil of pride.

Critical Comments

Gulliver's efforts to lend an air of realism to his account. In this concluding chapter, Gulliver tries to convince us that he has given us a faithful history of his travels over a period of sixteen years or so. At various points in the course of his narration, Gulliver has

been trying to assure us that he is not exaggerating or distorting the facts. Gulliver has been repeatedly giving us such assurances so that we should not doubt the authenticity of Gulliver's account. This is a literary device used by Swift in order to lend an air of realism to his book which evidently contains many improbable and fantastic elements. In this last chapter he again uses the same device, pointing out that he has related plain matters of fact in the simplest manner and style. Gulliver says that he is different from other travellers who, while recording their experiences, introduce many fanciful situations into their work and often falsify the facts in order to make their narration more interesting or exciting. Gulliver affirms that he has not written a fabulous account of his travels, that he has never swerved from the truth, and that he has strictly adhered to the facts.

Gulliver's love of truth and the motive behind his account. Gulliver supports this statement by reminding us that he has lived among the Houyhnhnms who did not even know what falsehood meant and whose love of truth had so impressed him that he too had vowed never to tell a lie. Gulliver then thus states his object in having written this account of his travels :

> "I write for the noblest end, to inform and instruct mankind, over whom I may, without breach of modesty, pretend to some superiority from the advantages I received by conversing so long among the most accomplished Houyhnhnms. I write without any view towards profit or praise."

Here Gulliver (or Swift) appears as a moralist. (Every satirist, no matter how cynical he may be, is prompted to write his satire by moral and ethical motives.) Truth is the virtue which Gulliver upholds here, citing the example of the Houyhnhnms.

Swift's anti-imperialist view. Swift here also takes the opportunity to convey to us through Gulliver his opposition to colonialism or imperialism. He does not believe that his country should embark on a campaign to conquer countries like Lilliput, Laputa, and the land of the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver would like that his countrymen should rather learn from the example of the Houyhnhnms than try to conquer that nation.

The excessive misanthropy of Gulliver. The attitude of hatred which Gulliver has now developed towards his own people shows excessive cynicism and misanthropy. Gulliver finds it impossible to get over his abhorrence for the human race whom he regards as no better than the Yahoos whom he had met. Gulliver now finds it difficult even to tolerate the sight of a human creature, and he cannot endure the smell of the members of his own family. It is after a long time that he permits his wife to sit at dinner with him and that too at the farthest end of a long table, shutting off her smell by keeping his own nostrils covered. Such an attitude is not likely to recommend itself to many readers.

Swift's attack on the vice of pride. Towards the close of this chapter, Gulliver attacks the vice of pride in human beings. This may be regarded as a parting shot by Swift. Gulliver here tells us that he could reconcile himself to most of the vices and follies of human beings if they had been free from the vice of pride which is most odious and detestable in his eyes. The Houyhnhnms, he points out, live under the Government of Reason and are not at all proud of the good qualities they possess.

7

Swift and English Politics of His Time

The Whigs and the Tories. In order to understand some of the allusions to political personalities and events in Gulliver's time, we have to become acquainted with the historical background of Swift's book. In the first place we should know who the Whigs and the Tories were. There existed at that time two major political parties known as the Whigs and the Tories. These parties had taken shape under Charles II. The Whigs were those who (*a*) opposed the King's attempt to make himself independent of Parliament by means of a subsidy from France ; and (*b*) worked up the Popish Plot scare to exclude the Duke of York (afterwards James II) from the succession to the throne. The Tories were those who took the opposite line on these matters. There were also certain social distinctions between these two parties. The Whigs were mainly town-dwellers—shop-keepers, merchants, bankers, professional men, Low Churchmen, etc. The Tories were mainly country-dwellers—squires and parsons with their tenants and dependants—still the backbone of the country (mostly the descendants of the old Royalists). The Whigs wanted to safeguard the powers of Parliament. As Low Churchmen they attached little importance to the privileges of the Church and wanted toleration for dissenters. In foreign affairs they supported an alliance with the Dutch to check Louis XIV. The Tories believed in the supremacy of the Crown (Divine Right and Non-resistance), until James II frightened them by using his Divine Right to attack Protestantism. As High Churchmen they attached great importance to the privileges of the Church of England, and wanted the dissenters to be persecuted. In foreign affairs they believed in a "splendid isolation"——no entangling alliances with the Dutch, and no hostility to France. They were in favour of international peace because war increased the land tax which fell mostly on Tory squires, while the money mostly went in army contracts which put much of it into the pockets of Whig merchants and bankers.

The attitude of the Tories to war. In 1702 the Tories had been forced by the actions of Louis XIV of France into supporting England's entry into the Grand Alliance. But this step was contrary

to their basic principles, and they soon turned against it. In Parliament they belittled the victories of Marlborough, and restricted the scope of his operations as much as they could. Marlborough, originally a Tory, was alienated from that party by their opposition to the war. He used his great influence to procure a Whig Parliament and Ministry. Thus the war became a Whig war.

The Tories in power. In course of time the nation grew tired of the war which had become more expensive and less successful each year. The result was that public opinion swung round to support the Tory opposition to war. The Queen also became sick of the interference by the Duchess of Marlborough. In 1710 the Tories came into power. They at once restricted Marlborough's activities and then dismissed him from his command. The Tory government next withdrew British troops (1711) and then opened negotiations with France. Eventually the Tories signed a treaty of peace with France at Utrecht in 1713.

George I and Sir Robert Walpole. Queen Anne was the English monarch from 1702 to 1714. When she died suddenly in August, 1714, she was succeeded on the throne by George I. The new monarch favoured the Whigs as against the Tory sympathies of Queen Anne. An important event of the reign of George I was the financial crisis known as the South Sea Bubble (1720). The South Sea Company had been formed in 1711 from people who lent money to the government for the war. But the company came to grief on account of malpractices and frauds by the directors. At this time a Whig government was in power, and it seemed as if the Whigs would be thrown out from the government. But among the subordinate members of the government was a man called Robert Walpole. By a skilful manipulation of the assets of the South Sea Company he was able to cut down the losses of the shareholders to a minimum. This was the beginning of his rise to power, although the methods which he employed to keep himself in power would in our days be thought to be shamelessly corrupt.

Swift, first a Whig, then a Tory. During the reign of William III party strife in England was bitter between the Whigs and the Tories, and this struggle was continued in the reign of Queen Anne. Almost all the prominent literary men of the time were engaged on one side or the other. Swift, who after 1708 was much in London, engaged in promoting the interests of the Anglican Church in Ireland, first wrote on the side of the Whigs ; but in 1710 he joined the Tories who were just coming into power and who were more friendly to the interests of the Church. The Tories were determined to stop the war with France, and in defence of this policy Swift wrote one of his strongest political articles under the heading, *The Conduct of the Allies*. His life during these years is reflected in his *Journal to Stella*, a series of letters which he wrote to his friend, Esther Johnson. Here we find Swift playing the part in which he most delighted, that of a man of affairs, active, successful, and powerful.

He records with gusto his hours spent with the members of the government, their politeness and his own proud familiarity with them, his ability to serve his friends and to punish his enemies. In 1713, as a reward for his support of the Tory government, he was appointed Dean of St. Patrick's in Dublin, an office little to his taste. The next year, upon the death of Queen Anne, the Tories went out of power, and Swift returned to Ireland to live as a discredited Tory among violent Whigs.

Writings in defence of the Irish. In Ireland his unceasing activity found an outlet in defending the Irish from the tyranny of the English government in London. In this context he published the *Drapier's Letters*, most of them in 1724, as a protest against debasing the Irish coinage, a protest which proved most successful. But, as the years passed, his hatred for the world grew stronger, and his satire more bitter. His growing misanthropy was shown in the terrible satire called *A Modest Proposal for Preventing the Children of Poor People from Being a Burden to their Parents or the Country.* Ireland, he said, was a mass of beggars, thieves, oppressors, fools, and knaves ; but he must be content to die there : with such a people, it was better to die than to live.

The political pamphlets written by Swift. The political pamphlets which Swift wrote during the closing years of Queen Anne's reign are of interest rather to the historian than to the student of literature because they are largely concerned with questions of temporary interest or with personal quarrels. *The Conduct of the Allies*, already mentioned above, was followed by a pamphlet called *Some Remarks on the Barrier Treaty* (1712), which forms a supplement to it ; and, in the some year, by *Some Advice Humbly Offered to the Members of the October Club*, which was intended to pacify the extreme Tories who were dissatisfied with Harely. During the months that followed the death of Queen Anne, Swift wrote several pieces in which he defended the late ministry, denied the existence of intrigues with Jacobites, and explained his own connection with the Tories. One of these pieces was entitled *Memoirs, Relating to that Change Which Happened to the Queen's Ministry in the Year 1710.* One of Swift's most violent pamphlets was entitled *A Short Character of Thomas Earl of Wharton* in which the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland was charged with every form of vice.

8

"Gulliver's Travels" : A Critical Analysis

A satire, a parody, and a comic masterpiece. The book called *Gulliver's Travels* is a satire on four aspects of man : the physical, the political, the intellectual, and the moral. The book is also a brilliant parody of travel literature ; and it is at once science fiction and a witty parody of science fiction. It expresses savage indignation at the follies, vices, and stupidities of men, and it shows an awareness of man's tragic insufficiency. At the same time it is a great comic masterpiece, a fact which readers of solemn temperaments often fail to recognize.

The book neither morbid, nor the work of a madman. It would not be absolutely correct to think that *Gulliver's Travels* expresses despair or that the book is nihilistic in its outlook. All Swift's satire was certainly written in anger, contempt, or disgust ; but it was written to promote self-knowledge in the faith that self-knowledge could lead to right action. Some commentators have wrongly called this book morbid, and some have gone so far as to think that it is the work of a man who was going mad at the time he wrote it. But the fact is that the gaiety and comedy of the voyages described in the book are an indication of Swift's essential intellectual and spiritual good health. This book was written when Swift was at the height of his intellectual powers ; and the comic spirit of the book as a whole rules out the view that it is morbid and that it shows the mental illness of the author.

Occasions on which we laugh in the course of our reading the book. As we go through this book, we laugh frequently. We laugh and were meant to laugh at the toy kingdom of the Lilliputians ; at the acrobatic skill of the politicians and the courtiers ; at the absurd jealousy of the diminutive minister who suspects an adulterous relationship between his wife and the giant Gulliver. We laugh at the plight of Gulliver in Brobdingnag : one of the lords of creation, frightened by a puppy, rendered ludicrous

by the tricks of a mischievous monkey, in awe of a dwarf; embarrassed by the lascivious antics of the maids of honour; and at last content to be tended like a baby by his girl-nurse. We laugh at the abstractness of the philosophers of Laputa, and at the mad experimenters of Balnibarbi. And we are right in at least smiling at the preposterous horses, the Houyhnhnms, so limited and so positive in their knowledge and opinions, so skilled in such improbable tasks as threading needles or carrying trays, so complacent in their belief that they are "the perfection of nature". Much of the pleasure that we feel in this book is due to this gay, comic, fanciful inventiveness. However, we should also keep in mind the fact that, beyond the mirth and liveliness of the book, are gravity, anger, anxiety, and frustration, and Swift intended that we should experience these also in full measure.

Our laughter, silenced by the spectacle of corrupt human nature. We can put the case by saying that, while the surface of the book is comic, at its centre is tragedy, transformed by means of style and tone into cold irony. Swift is a great master of shock. With perfect control of tone and pace, and with perfect timing, he startles us into an awareness of a dark abyss, the abyss of corrupt human nature. Swift forces us to look into the stupid, evil, brutal heart of humanity and, when we do, our laughter is abruptly silenced. Swift's irony makes some readers call him a hateful misanthrope, but others have found this irony wholesome and invigorating.

Events which established the tones of the four voyages. The title of the book tells us that it is an account of Gulliver's travels into several remote nations of the world. The four voyages of Gulliver are so arranged in the book as to show an intensification of tone as we travel through increasing darkness into the black heart of humanity. But the forward movement of the book is interrupted by the third voyage which is a grim comment on science, politics, economics as practised by madmen. (Swift uses the term madmen for those who misuse human reason.) The tone of each voyage is established by the nature of the event that brings about the adventure. In the first voyage (which is the gayest and the most benign), it is accident, or the carelessness of the look-out, which accounts for the ship-wreck. In the second (which is much more savage in tone), Gulliver is left alone in a strange land through the cowardice of his shipmates. In the third, he is captured and later abandoned by pirates. In the fourth, his crew of cut-throats revolts, seizes the ship, and leaves him to starve on a near-by island.

The idea of the great chain of being used by Swift in the first two voyages. The first two voyages show how effectively Swift uses the idea of the great chain of being. The philosopher Pascal had asked what is man in nature, and had thus answered the question: "A Nothing in comparison with the Infinite, an All in comparison with the Nothing, a mean between nothing and everything." Swift

translates this theme into a different key, and makes it the major instrument of his satire. In the first two voyages, Gulliver is made aware of the disproportion which Pascal had found in man. Placed on the isthmus of a middle state, Gulliver in his voyage to Lilliput looks down the chain of being and finds himself an awkward giant in that delicate kingdom. In the voyage to Brobdingnag he looks up the chain and discovers a race of superior beings among whom his pride melts on account of his humiliating knowledge of his own physical insignificance. Although the emphasis in these two voyages is upon physical size, it is notable that Lilliput calls into operation Gulliver's kindliness and gentleness, and that Brobdingnag brings out his moral and physical courage. This means that, although man is comically and tragically disproportioned, man has moral virtues which he can exercise and which he does exercise.

The disproportion in the Lilliputians. But the satire of Swift is a double weapon. The inhabitants of these two strange lands (Lilliput and Brobdingnag) are also disproportioned. From the start the Lilliputians arouse our interest and win our liking. The pigmies of Lilliput ingeniously capture the giant whom chance has cast on their shore. They humanely solve the problem of feeding him. Their pretty land and their fascinating little city capture our fancy. But in the end they prove to be proud, envious, rapacious, treacherous, cruel, revengeful, jealous, and hypocritical. Their social and political systems have become corrupt. They are governed by an emperor who aims at destroying the neighbouring kingdom. The courtiers and ministers here are chosen not for their fitness but for their skill in walking on the tight rope and leaping over sticks or creeping under them. The pigmies of Lilliput are an example of the disproportion of man like Gulliver himself. Their vices, their appetites, their ambitions, and their passions are too big for their small stature. They appear to Gulliver to be venomous and petty, even as Gulliver and his kind must appear to some higher order of beings.

The enlightened and benevolent Brobdingnagians. In Brobdingnag we meet creatures ten or twelve times the size of Europeans, and we share Gulliver's anxiety lest their moral natures be as brutish as their bodies. But the reverse is true. Through a violent shift of simple tone and point of view Gulliver, who seemed to be lovable and humane among the Lilliputians, appears disgraceful and morally insensitive in contrast to the enlightened and benevolent people of this land. Since Gulliver represents us (all human beings), his shame and ludicrousness are ours. When the peasants of Brobdingnag discover Gulliver, they feel both curiosity and dislike. The farmer picks him up with the caution of one who tries to catch a small dangerous animal in such a way that it shall not be able to scratch or bite him. Gulliver fears that his captor may dash him to the ground.

The reaction of the Brobdingnagian King to Gulliver's description of England. Gulliver is subjected to one humiliation after another,

but he is still blind to the defects of European society. When he is questioned by the King about England, he describes, with enthusiasm, the class system, the constitution, the laws, the military glory, and the history of that country. In the King's questions we hear the voice of morality condemning the institutions of the modern world. And the verdict of a moral being on European man is given in the following words in which we can perceive the King's contempt :

> "But, by what I have gathered from your own relation, and the answers I have with much pains wringed and extorted from you, I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." (Part II, Chapter 6)

Such a conclusion is inescapable because the King is high-minded, benevolent, and rational. The King and his people think practically, not theoretically ; concretely, not metaphysically ; simply, not intricately. Brobdingnag is Swift's utopia of common good sense and morality ; while Gulliver, conditioned by the corrupt society from which he comes, appears to be blind to moral values. Gulliver's account of the history of England in the seventeenth century draws the following crushing retort from the King :

> "It was only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, banishments ; the very worst effects that avarice, faction, hypocrisy, perfidiousness, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice and ambition could produce." (Part II, Chapter 6)

Gulliver's adverse comments on the King's views. When Gulliver offers to the King a complete control over his subjects by teaching him to manufacture gunpowder, the King is horrified. Thereupon Gulliver, speaking as a European, feels surprise and contempt, and explains the King's rejection as "a strange effect of narrow principles and short views". The King is baffled by the concept of *political science.* He cannot understand how the art of government can be reduced to a science. This is how Gulliver comments on the King's attitude :

> "He confined the knowledge of governing within very *narrow bounds*, to common sense and reason, to justice and lenity, to the speedy determination of civil and criminal causes, with some other obvious topics which are not worth considering. And he gave it for his opinion that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together." (Part II, Chapter 7)

The learning of the Brobdingnagians is simple and practical, "consis ting only in morality, history, poetry, and mathematics". It is

noteworthy that Swift omits metaphysics, theoretical science, and theology from the category of useful knowledge.

Swift's attack on human pride and vanity. Swift makes a brilliant use of the chain of being in order to make his attack on pride in the first two voyages more powerful. As we are expected to recognize ourselves in the Lilliputians, and also in Gulliver when he arrives in Brobdingnag, we become aware of our own pettiness; we become aware of the disproportion of the human race and of the shocking difference between what we profess and what we are. But Swift uses the good giants to strike a blow at human vanity and to introduce a motif which afterwards he employs with a terrible effect in the last voyage. That motif is disgust, of which Swifts is a great master. Philosophers of the time were never tired of admiring the beautiful perfection of the human body, its intricateness, its perfect power of speech and expression, its happy appropriateness to the particular place which men occupy in the scheme of things. But how does this glorious human body appear to inferior creatures like insects? Swifts wants us to understand the answer by making us share Gulliver's disgust at the cancerous breasts and lousy bodies of the beggars, and at the blotched colour, the huge pores, the coarse hairs, and the nauseating odours of the maids of honour. Such is the skin, perhaps, that the Borbdingnagians love to touch. Human beauty is only apparent, while human disproportion is real.

Part III, loosely episodic. The account of the third voyage of Gulliver has generally been regarded as the least successful. However, as at least one critic points out, it is the funniest account in the whole book. Structurally this account is loosely episodic, lacking a unity of action and tone. In this account we have the details of Gulliver's visit to Laputa or the flying island, to Lagado (which is the capital of Balni barbi), to Glubbdubdrib, to Luggnagg, and to Japan. It is because Gulliver visits several countries in the course of this voyage that his account appears to be sprawling and not well-knit. It would seem that Swift has put all the material here which he could not work into the other three voyages. This third voyage is a kind of fantasia on two themes which Swift treats under a single metaphor. The metaphor is science, and the themes are politics and the abuse of reason.

The comic obsessions of the people of Laputa (in Part III). The people of Laputa or the flying island visited by Gulliver in the course of his third voyage are obsessed with only two branches of knowledge—namely, mathematics and music. These obsessions render these people awkward and clumsy so far as the common actions and behaviour of life are concerned. They are very bad reasoners; and imagination, fancy, and invention are alien to them. The tailor who is ordered to make a suit of clothes for Gulliver first takes Gulliver's altitude with a quadrant; and then, with rule and compasses, sketches the dimensions and outlines of Gulliver's

whole body on a sheet of paper. After six days, the tailor brings a suit of clothes which is very badly made and which is quite out of shape because he had made a mistake in his calculations. The obsession with music makes these people think that they can hear the music of the spheres. Besides, these people are in a state of constant fear because of the changes which they think would take place in the heavenly bodies. They apprehend that the earth would, in course of time, be swallowed up by the sun or that the face of the sun would by degrees become dark and therefore give no more light to the world. The astronomers on this island have been able to make discoveries beyond those made by European astronomers. The astronomers here have made a catalogue of ten thousand fixed stars ; they have discovered two satellites revolving about Mars ; and they have observed ninetythree different comets. All this is intended to be a satire on the scientific experiments of the time, because Swift was no believer in science.

Satire on new agricultural methods prevailing in Lagado (in Part III). The satire on scientific research continues when Gulliver is informed by Munodi that the new agricultural methods, introduced in Lagado by those who had fallen under the influence of life in Laputa, have proved to be a complete failure. Munodi points out that the new methods had yielded no results, so that the whole country now lies in a state of neglect, with the houses in ruins and the people without food or clothes. By the new schemes which were introduced into Lagado, Swift may have meant the new agricultural methods in vogue in England in the beginning of the eighteenth century. It is noteworthy that the various projects introduced by the persons who had visited Laputa and fallen under the influence of the Laputans are impractical. One such project is that "all the fruits of the earth shall come to maturity at whatever season we think fit to choose, and increase a hundredfold more than they do at present."

Satire on preposterous scientific projects in Lagado (in Part III). The scientific experiments in this part of the book also include the various researches that are in progress at the Academy of Projectors in Lagado. The projects at this Academy are fantastic and preposterous. Experiments are being made to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to convert human excrement into its original food, to build houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, to obtain silk from cobwebs, and to produce books on various subjects by the use of a machine and without having to use one's brain.

Satire on politicians in Lagado (in Part III). So far as politics is concerned, Swift makes us laugh at the foolishness and selfishness of the favourites of monarchs and others engaged in the game of politics. There is a school of political projects at the Academy of Lagado. Swift ironically tells us that the professors at this school have a scheme for persuading Kings to choose favourites on the basis of wisdom, capacity, and virtue ; for teaching ministers of the

government to be guided by the public good ; for rewarding merit and ability ; for choosing for employment persons who are properly qualified ; and so on. One ingenious professor has proposed that every legislator should be given a certain medicine which will keep him in a fit mental condition so that he should not talk any nonsense during the whole session of the legislative assembly. Another professor has suggested that the favourites of kings should be given suitable medicines to stimulate their memories so that they should not forget their promises to the public. Another suggestion is that every legislator, after stating his opinion and arguing in defence of it, should be compelled to give his vote directly contrary because, if that is done, the result would be in the interests of the public. A method involving a surgical operation to bring about a reconciliation between the views of two opposing parties in a country has also been developed. Furthermore, methods have been devised for raising funds through taxation without upsetting the members of the public. One of the professors has devised ways and means for discovering plots and conspiracies against the government. These ways and means include an investigation of the diet of all suspected persons, their times of eating, upon which side they lie in bed, with which hand they wipe their posteriors, and so on.

Satire on historians, literary critics, and others (in Part III.) In addition to the two major targets of satire in Part III, we also have a criticism of historians and historical researches. Alexander and Hannibal, for instance, give to Gulliver different versions of certain events from those found in books of history. The commentators and critics of Homer and Aristotle are also ridiculed for having grossly misrepresented these two great authors to the world. Swift also mocks at men and women of great families who had married persons of the lowest classes, thus injecting inferior blood into their families. Those who have risen to worldly greatness by adopting shameful methods are also the objects of Swift's satirical attack. And, finally, there is the grim and corrosive satire on the human longing for immortality which is symbolized by the Struldbrugs.

The fourth voyage, a target of attack. The fourth voyage in *Gulliver's Travels* marks the climax of the book. This great section has provoked violent attacks on Swift and his book. The reason for these attacks is that this portion of the book has been misunderstood. This portion has offended the unreflective and pious Christian, the sentimentalist, and the optimist. According to Thackeray, the meaning of this part of the book was that "man is utterly wicked; desperate, and imbecile, and his passions are monstrous and his boosted power mean, that he is and deserves to be the shame of brutes, and ignorance is better than his vaunted reason." Thackeray adds: "It is Yahoo language, a monster gibbering shrieks and gnashing imprecations against mankind, filthy in word, filthy in thought, furious, raging, obscene." The view that Swift was a savage, mad, embittered misanthrope is largely based upon this

misinterpretation of the last voyage. Actually, the account of the last voyage is the work of a Christian-humanist and a moralist.

Reasons for the attack on the account of the fourth voyage. The reasons why the account of the last voyage has been misunderstood are as follows :

1. The sheer intensity and violent rhetoric of the voyage are overwhelming and may almost paralyze the critical faculty of certain readers.

2. Gulliver in the frenzy of his mad misanthropy has been too easily identified with Swift himself. Actually, Gulliver is speaking for himself, and not for Swift. A careful reading would reveal the fact that Gulliver becomes the victim of Swift's irony as he grows to hate the human race. The final pages of the book are grimly comic.

3. The primary symbols of this voyage have been totally misunderstood. The Houyhnhnms have been regarded as Swift's ideal for man, and the Yahoos have been identified as his representation of what men are in actual fact. Neither of these opinions seems to be correct.

Gulliver, situated on the isthmus* of a middle state. In the first two voyages Gulliver is shown uncomfortably situated on the isthmus of a middle state between the very small (Lilliput) and the very large (Brobdingnag). In the last voyage also he stands on an isthmus, but now the isthmus exists between the purely rational and the purely sensual—between Houyhnhnm and Yahoo. Neither of these symbols can stand for men, because Gulliver is himself the symbol of mankind. Unfortunately, Gulliver shares somehow in the nature of both extremes. Swift simply isolates the two elements that combine in the duality of man, the middle link, in order to allow Gulliver to contemplate each in its essence.

The portrayal of the Houyhnhnms (in Part IV). Swift does not recommend that Gulliver (who represents us also) should try to become a Houyhnhnm. We find that in every sense Houyhnhnm-land is a rationalistic paradise. The Houyhnhnms are the embodiment of pure reason. They know neither love nor grief nor lust nor ambition. They cannot lie, and they do not understand the meaning of *opinion*. Their society is an aristocracy, based upon the slave labour of the Yahoos and the work of a specially-bred servant class. They face the processes of life, such as marriage, child-birth, accident, and death with a stoical calm. Their society is a planned society that has achieved the mild anarchy which many utopian dreamers have aspired to. They practise eugenics and they control the size of their population. Children are educated by the State.

***An isthmus literally means a narrow piece of land connecting two larger ones. Here it simply means the middle position between two extremes.**

The agrarian economy is supervised by a democratic council. The government is conducted entirely by periodic assemblies. The Houyhnhnms feel natural human affection for one another, but they love every one equally. This picture is all very admirable, but it is remote from the possibilities of human life.

The Houyhnhnms' way of life not ideal. Nor does Swift intend us to accept this as an ideal way of life. The Houyhnhnms are obviously Cartesians,* and obviously stoics. Swift was anti-Cartesian from the beginning for the simple reason that he held that Descartes was self-deceived and that man's reason was incapable of the feats that Descartes attributed to it. Similarly, Swift was opposed to stoicism, and he recorded his adverse view of it elsewhere in his work. "The stoical scheme of supplying our wants, by lopping off our desires, is like cutting off our feet when we want shoes", Swift has written. It is Gulliver, not Swift, who is greatly impressed by the Houyhnhnms and who aspires to rise above the human condition and to become pure intelligence as these horses are.

The Yahoos, symbolic of the bestial element in human nature. The Yahoos constitute the most powerful single symbol in the entire work of Swift. They do not represent Swift's view of man ; they rather represent Swift's view of the bestial element in man, the unenlightened, unregenerate, irrational element in human nature. That is the reason why the Houyhnhnms classify Gulliver with the Yahoos. That is why the female Yahoo wishes to copulate with him. That is why, despite his instinctive shrinking from them, Gulliver has to admit with shame and horror that he is more like the Yahoos than like the Houyhnhnms. Because of his neglect or misuse of human reason, the European man has sunk nearer to the Yahoo pole of his nature than he has risen toward the Houyhnhnm pole. The seeds of human society and of human depravity, as they exist in Europe, are clearly found in the society and conduct of the Yahoos. Gulliver looks into the ugly abyss of human nature unlighted by the frail light of reason and of morality ; and the sight drives him mad.

Gulliver's misanthropy, resulting from his experience of the Yahoos. It is Gulliver, not Swift, who, feeling repelled by what he sees, identifies the Yahoos with men, and so he, not Swift, turns a misanthrope. Since he does not want to be a Yahoo, he seeks to become a Houyhnhnm as nearly as possible. But he can do so only by denying his place in and responsibility to the human condition, by aspiring above the middle link, which is man, to the next higher link which is that of the purely rational. The wise Houyhnhnm, to whom he gives a terrifying account of European man and society, concludes that the corruption of reason is worse than brutality itself, and that man is more dangerous than the Yahoo. This is

*Cartesians : followers of the philosopher Descartes

profoundly true. But its effect on Gulliver is to awaken a loathing of all that is human.

Gulliver's alienation from the human race. Although the Houyhnhnms never acknowledge that Gulliver is more than an unusually gifted Yahoo, he aspires to their rationality, stoicism, and simple wisdom. Thinking that he has attained these qualities, he feeds his growing misanthropy on pride, which alienates him not only from his remote kinsmen, the Yahoos, but eventually from his brethren, the human race.

Gulliver, a changed man at the end. From the moment that the banished Gulliver in despair sets sail from Houyhnhnm-land, his pride, his misanthropy, and his madness become apparent. Deceived by his worship of pure reason, he commits the error of the Houyhnhnms in equating human beings with the Yahoos. When he is captured by a Portuguese crew and forced to return from sullen solitude to humanity, he trembles between fear and hatred. The Captain of the ship, Don Pedro de Mendez, like Gulliver himself, shares the nature of the Houyhnhnm and the Yahoo, and like the Gulliver of the first voyage he is tolerant, sympathetic, kindly, patient, and charitable. But Gulliver can no longer recognize these traits in a human being. With the short-sightedness of the Houyhnhnms, he perceives only the Yahoo and is repelled by Don Pedro's clothes, food, and odour. Gradually, however, he is nursed back to partial health, and is compelled to admit, in the very tones of his admired horses, that his benefactor has a "very good *human* understanding". But the Gulliver who writes this book is still under the control of his obsession, and when we last see him he prefers the smell and conversation of his two horses to the company of his wife and children. This is misanthropy in the manner of Timon* of Athens, not in the manner of Swift. In the ironic coda with which the book ends, Swift directs his savage, comic gaze straight at Gulliver and his insane pretensions :

> "My reconcilement to the Yahoo-kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those vices and follies only which nature has entitled them to. I am not in the least provoked at the sight of a lawyer, a pick-pocket, a colonel, a fool, a lord, a gamester, a politician, a whoremonger, a physician, an evidence, a suborner, an attorney, a traitor, or the like. This is all according to the due course of things. But when I behold a lump of deformity, and diseases both of body and mind, smitten with *pride*, it immediately breaks all the measures of my patience ; neither shall I ever be able to comprehend how such an animal and such a vice could tally together". (Part IV, Chapter 12)

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*Timon of Athens, an ancient Greek, is regarded as an embodiment of misanthropy.

9

"Gulliver's Travels": Critical Approaches

I

A letter that Swift wrote to Alexander Pope with regard to *Gulliver's Travels* offers considerable help to us in understanding Swift's attitudes towards mankind as expressed in this work. The letter is dated the 29th September, 1725 and reads as follows:

> "The chief end I propose to myself in all my labours is to vex the world rather than divert it. I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities and all my love is toward individuals: for instance, I hate the tribe of lawyers, but I love Counsellor Such-a-one, Judge Such-a-one; for so with physicians (I will not speak of my own trade), soldiers, English, Scotch, French, and the rest. But principally I hate and detest that animal called man, although I heartily love John, Peter, Thomas, and so forth. This is the system upon which I have governed myself many years and so I shall go on till I have done with them. I have got materials towards a treatise, proving the falsity of that definition *animal rationale* and to show it should be only *rationis capax*. Upon this great foundation of misanthropy (though not Timon's manner), the whole building of my *Travels* is erected; and I never will have peace of mind till all honest men are of my opinion. By consequence you are to embrace it immediately, and procure that all who deserve my esteem may do so too. The matter is so clear that it will admit little dispute; nay, I will hold a hundred pounds that you and I agree on the point."

When Swift says that he hates collective entities but loves individuals, he, of course, means that human beings are by nature detestable, though individuals may be lovable. This letter, although helpful, does not make Swift's relationship to Gulliver absolutely

clear. The result is that, while some think that Gulliver is Swift's mouthpiece or spokesman, others believe that Gulliver is a *persona* whose views differ from Swift's own.

In another letter, Swift wrote :

> "Drown the world. I am not content with despising it but I would anger it if I could with safety. I tell you after all that I do not hate mankind ; it is *vous autres* who hate them, because you would have them reasonable animals, and are angry for being disappointed."

II

A contrast between the theories of Hobbes and Locke. In the last voyage of *Gulliver's Travels*, we find that, knowingly or unknowingly, Swift has instituted a contrast between the political theories of Hobbes and Locke with regard to the state of nature. Men in the state of nature as defined by Hobbes are like Swift's Yahoos, and are "in that condition which is called war ; and such a war, as is of every man against every man, with no arts, no letters, no society and which, is worst of all, continual fear of violent danger ; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short". And the corresponding similarity between Locke and Swift is also noteworthy. Men in the state of nature, as defined by Locke, are like the Houyhnhnms : they are rational creatures "living together according to reason, without a common superior", in a state of liberty without licence, every one administering the laws of nature for himself, laws of temperance and mutual benevolence. On the whole, Swift stands nearer to Hobbes. In *Gulliver's Travels*, however, Swift is clearly neither Hobbes nor Locke. Gulliver is neither Yahoo nor Houyhnhnm. He cannot attain to the rational bliss of the Houyhnhnms nor has he sunk to the level of the Yahoos. He lacks the strength of a healthy animal, and his possession of a certain degree of rationality has unhappily burdened him with the responsibility of a conscience.

An allegorical picture of man's dual nature. If Swift's own hints as to the meaning of his book are taken into consideration, the main thesis of the book would seem to be hidden in the contrast between the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver, occupying a position between the two, part beast, part reason, is Swift's allegorical picture of the dual nature of man. He is not Houyhnhnm or *animal rationale* ; nor is he a Yahoo. He is *rationis capax*. We could apply to *Gulliver's Travels* a passage from the writings of the ancient Roman thinker Cicero : "Nature has been to man not a mother but a step-mother—sending him into the world naked, frail, and infirm, toiling under a burden of care, fearful, slothful, and given over to lust, but not without a spark of divine reason."

III

Gulliver's development. Gulliver develops in depth and seriousness as his story progresses, and his character becomes mo e

profound and his criticism more searching. The sequence of his development is clear in Parts I, II, and IV ; and, if not strengthened by Part III, it is yet not disturbed by it.

Condemnation of the human species in Brobdingnag. The political allegory which in Part I is characterized by particularity of reference does not have a proportionate development in Part II. Also while in Lilliput Gulliver is the victim of ingratitude, petty jealousy, and slander, in Brobdingnag he meets with opposition of a more formidable kind. Gulliver's conversations with the King of Brobdingnag are often quoted as examples of Swift's satirical force. In the first encounter with the King that Gulliver reports, he hears "how contemptible a thing was human grandeur which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects". A later encounter ends in the King's famous criticism of mankind as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth".

Indication of Gulliver's decline into Timonism.* This element in the voyage to Brobdingnag is different in essential quality from anything in Part I. It is an item in the series of events and attitudes which indicates Gulliver's development or marks his decline into Timonism. Its effect upon the reader is powerful, and in some way it involves the complex inter-relationships between Swift, Gulliver, and the reader.

The fiercest of Swift's satires. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* is in many ways the fiercest of Swift's satires. Gulliver slowly realizes that he must acknowledge his kinship with the Yahoos. The ritual farewell to the Houyhnhnm master is a forsaking of his hope to achieve rationality. This Part is generally explained by a reference to Swift's oft-quoted letter to Alexander Pope, despite the fact that Gulliver apparently, and the Yahoos certainly, are somewhat less than *rationis capax*.

The crux of the matter. Part IV has, however, qualities different from those of the letter to Pope. Its content cannot be reduced to a simple statement of doctrine. Gulliver's display of sentimentality for the rational is not without its element of incongruity. The crux of the matter is in the conclusion of the whole book, and in the interpretation of Gulliver's happiness in the company of his English horses. If the perfections of the Houyhnhnms are indeed perfect, and if the people of England are indeed Yahoos, then Swift's final counsel is a counsel of despair. But if the final chapter is taken as a betrayal of the doctrine of the Houyhnhnms, the effect is somewhat different.

The satiric betrayal. Upon his return from the Houyhnhnms,

*Timonism : the cynical attitude of Timon. Timon was an ancient Athenian who developed a deep hatred of mankind. Shakespeare wrote a play about him. The play is called *Timon of Athens*.

Gulliver cannot endure the presence of other human beings. Their odour offends him. The idea of their caresses nauseates him. Above all, he despises in them their sin of pride. Sitting with his ordinary English horses and hating all human creatures, he says : "I here entreat those who have any tincture of this absurd vice that they will not presume to appear in my sight." At this point Gulliver's own attitude seems objectionable to us. Although he condemns the vice of pride, he shows in his own attitude the symptoms of this vice. The effect is therefore one of satiric betrayal. In Part IV Swift advances a doctrine and wins its acceptance. The doctrine is that of the Houyhnhnms. Swift then betrays this doctrine by his description of Gulliver's final excesses. The reader, convinced on both counts, revises his opinion and is compelled to be aware of the revision. His awareness is satiric effect. The image in the satiric mirror is his own.

IV

Gulliver, an abstraction. Gulliver by his technique of narration is able to create a reality which is a reality only of externals. He does not create a sense of reality about himself ; or rather, Swift does not create a sense of reality about Gulliver. Gulliver is not a character in the sense in which Tom Jones, for example, is a character. Gulliver has the most minimal subjective life. Even his passion at the end is hardly rooted in personality. He is, in fact, an abstraction, manipulated in the service of satire. To say this of the principal character of any novel would be damning ; but in the case of this travel-book it is a necessary statement to make.

Gulliver's scanty inner life. The scantiness of Gulliver's inner life cannot be doubted. He is certainly shown as a decent, kindly, and honourable man in the very beginning. We feel very pleased when he tries to vindicate the honour of the Treasurer's wife whom malicious gossip has accused of having an affair with him in Lilliput. But his life is primarily of the senses. He sees, hears, smells, feels ; but there is little evidence of rational activity. The "leaping" and "creeping" contest at the Lilliputian court is an amusement for him, nothing more ; he sees no resemblance between it and the practices prevailing at any other court in the world. Except for an occasional episode where he is startled into an expression of bitterness, his life is one without nuances. The nuances are there, of course, every where, but they must be supplied by the reader.

Gulliver, a mouthpiece for ideas. In the second voyage Gulliver is even more obviously a mouthpiece for ideas than a character in his own right. True, he is occasionally reflective as when he says : "Undoubtedly philosophers are in the right when they tell us that nothing is great or little otherwise than by comparison". (He thus reflects when he is feeling afraid of being crushed under the feer

of a Brobdingnagian.) And his own thoughts may even reflect satirical insight, as when, for instance, he is struck by the following idea :

> "If I had then beheld a company of English lords and ladies in their finery and birthday clothes, acting their several parts in the most courtly manner of strutting and bowing and prating ; to say the truth I should have been strongly tempted to laugh as much at them as this King and his grandees did at me." (Part II, Chapter 3)

Gulliver has this idea when the King of Brobdingnag remarks on how human (meaning Brobdingnagian) grandeur can be mimicked by insects like Gulliver. Most of the time, however, Gulliver either is impenetrably innocent or embraces the pride and the folly of European civilization with enormous zeal.

The drift towards misanthropy. Still, the drift of Gulliver's attitude is clearly toward the misanthropic ; and when, in the last voyage, he finds himself caught between the fixed positions of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms, he is quick to make his unnaturally extreme choice. There is logic in his change. He has been to many lands and has become a part of all that he has known ; he has heard the King of Brobdingnag ; he has learnt the dirty secrets of modern history at Glubbdubdrib ; he has suffered at the hands of his own crew who behaved toward him most abominably. In a way his misanthropy is inevitable. But this is really beside the point, because the change in him comes about not in any psychologically plausible way, but because the final demands of the satire force him to change.

A comparison between Part II and Part IV. Part IV of the book is so similar to Part II that comparison becomes necessary. The intellectual climaxes of the two voyages come in conversations between Gulliver and his host of the moment. (The host in Part II is the King of Brobdingnag, and in Part IV the grey steed to whom Gulliver refers as the "master".) In Part II, Swift prepares the scene carefully, giving it a dramatic setting and structure. The conversations in Part IV are less sharply dramatized. The climactic Chapters (5 and 6) are hardly set apart from other talks in which Gulliver has explained to his master who and what he is. Gulliver here discourses on war, law, commerce, medicine, ministers of state, and the nobility, but this time he speaks in a torrent of invective rarely equalled in literature. The Houyhnhnm master has little role in this attack except to ask an occasional question. The whole tremendous force of these dozen pages or so is carried by Gulliver's vituperation. One thinks necessarily of Shakespeare's Timon in this context, yet the difference in tone between Gulliver and Timon is enormous. Timon expresses personal rage, and his hatred comes boiling forth in a mighty, prolonged curse. Gulliver here expresses no hatred ; he professes simply to be laying before

his master "the whole state of Europe", as he says. His tone is cold, analytic, and impersonal.

The positives in Part IV, the virtues of the Houyhnhnms. Against the destructiveness of Gulliver's attack in Part IV, we look in this Part for the kind of positives that are evident in the episode of the Brobdingnagian King. We naturally turn to the Houyhnhnms who represent to Gulliver "the perfection of nature" as against the repulsiveness of the Yahoos (who symbolize human beings). Both Gulliver and the Houyhnhnms take pains to point out wherein the Houyhnhnm's perfection lies. This perfection is physical, mental, and moral. Physically, Gulliver is filled with awe at the strength, comeliness, and speed of the horses, whereas he can view his own person only with detestation. The Houyhnhnms themselves are emphatic on the deficiencies of the human physique. They point out, for instance, that Gulliver's hands are too soft to walk on, his nails too short to claw with, his face flat, his nose prominent, and his eyes misplaced. Mentally, the lives of the horses are wholly governed by reason which is an infallible faculty, at least to the extent that there is nothing problematical about it. Reason strikes them with immediate conviction, so that opinion and controversy are unknown to them. Morally, the horses lead austere lives devoted to temperance, industry, and cleanliness ; they have no idea of what is evil ; they have no vice and no lusts ; their passions are firmly controlled by the rational faculty ; their principal virtues are friendship and benevolence. For Gulliver the Houyhnhnms are the repository of all that is good. All these, then, are the positives which Gulliver discovers in the Houyhnhnms.

The horror accompanied by mocking laughter. Although the horror of Part IV cannot be denied, this horror is accompanied by Swift's mocking laughter. It is true that the Houyhnhnm's condemnation of the human anatomy shows Swift's own lack of reverence for the human body. But it must be admitted that Swift also shows his sense of the comic while writing the scene of the Houyhnhnm's denigration of the human body. It is a very funny scene. It has the same satirical function as the parallel passage in the second voyage where the Brobdingnagian philosophers determine, after a close examination of Gulliver's shape and form, that he is incapable of preserving his life "either by swiftness, or climbing of trees, or digging holes in the earth" and must therefore be a freak of nature —this kind of assessment being "to the unspeakable advancement of human knowledge".

The comic absurdity of Gulliver's final attitude at the end. The equine feeling of superiority which the Houyhnhnms display is certainly amusing but it diminishes their authority ; it must raise doubts in our minds about their adequacy as guides to human excellence, to say nothing of the adequacy of Gulliver who wants to become a horse and whose capacities have not been such as to inspire confidence. The violence of Gulliver's alienation from his

own race incapacitate him for the common routine of life. Each of his voyages begins with a departure from the common routine, and each ends with a return to it—to his wife and children. This ordinary family represents a fixed point of stability and calm in Gulliver's life, a kind of norm of humble though enduring human values. It is against this background that his rejection of mankind in the end startles us. His first sight of his family after the years of absence produce in him only hatred, disgust, and contempt. His behaviour after his return shows a comic absurdity ; and this kind of inversion of common sense can even be described as a form of insanity.

V

Relationship of the human body and the human reason. One of the noteworthy aspects of *Gulliver's Travels* is the relationship of the human body and the human reason. In Lilliput, Gulliver's body is grosser than he can imagine, and the Lilliputians seem more delicate than they are in reality. In Brobdingnag, the human body becomes monstrous as Gulliver confronts, with microscopic acuteness, its ugliness and its smells. In both the Struldbruggs and the Yahoos we see bodies which are completely without control or cleanliness. In fact, the Yahoos take pleasure in filth and they use excrement as a weapon. The body becomes a physical symbol of the power-drives which are seen in the body politic. In Brobdingnag, there is ugliness as there is cruelty and at least some measure of corruption (such as the farmer's turning Gulliver into a profitable show, and the court dwarf's malice) ; but there is also a saving control of both corruption and physical nastiness. In the Struldbruggs, old age has produced physical deterioration, avarice, contentiousness, and irrationality. In the Yahoos, there is sheer abandoned animality. The Yahoos are particularly nasty animals, because they are a degenerate species which neither possesses the instinctive controls of other animals (such as seasonal mating) nor preserves the faculties by which the human animal controls itself —its rational powers.

VI

The Houyhnhnms' rational intuition and simplicity. In the fourth the voyage, the complexity of European civilization is traced in the savage behaviour of the Yahoos. The Yahoos have a prime minister ; they have court flirtations ; they are acquisitive hoarders of shining stones ; they become drunk and diseased ; they even have such a fashionable malady as the spleen. All the evils of civilization, and many of its professed glories, are caught in their elaborate behaviour. By contrast, the Houyhnhnms perform the necessary actions of a reasonable being. They believe that "reason alone is sufficient to govern a rational creature". They cannot even comprehend the nature of lies, let alone worse vices. "Neither is reason among them a point problematical as with us, where man can argue with

plausibility on both sides of a question ; but strikes you with immediate conviction, as it must needs do where it is not mingled, obscured, or discoloured by passion and interest". (Part IV, Chapter 8). The consequences of perfect rational intuition are acute. They have no parental partiality, nor do they mate except to bear children, and the choice of a marriage-partner is based on cool eugenic principles. They accept death as natural ripeness and a return to the first mother. This passionless simplicity, where all is governed by the impartial virtues of friendship and benevolence, is hard to explain or to understand.

An alleged satire. Critics have tended to find in the Houyhnhnms a satire upon the neo-Stoic humanism of Shaftesbury or the Deists. It is true that Swift mocks those who would base their lives on the belief that virtue is its own reward. But he does not mock the moral intuition which the Houyhnhnms live by. Of course, the Houyhnhnms are not human, and Swift could never have intended that we should treat them as models.

Neither intended as a model, nor meant to be a target of satire. In fact, Swift neither offers the Houyhnhnms as a model nor holds them up for satire. They have, it is true, some tell-tale complacency in the conclusions they draw without sufficient fact. But when Swift defends the ancient poets against ridicule, he points out that their moral teachings were altogether admirable within the limits of their awareness. The Houyhnhnms would make a ludicrous model for man, but it is Gulliver who makes them that. They remain an embodiment of the life of unclouded moral intuition ; a simple life, because there are no passions to produce conflict or to generate "opinion". In striking contrast to them is the Academy of Lagado, with its technical extravagance, its furious dedication to doing the unnecessary with the most dazzling ingenuity, its constant rediscovery of brute fact through ludicrous failure. The scientist who places the bellows to the posterior of a dog and inflates the beast until it explodes in a torrent of excrement serves as a link between the learning of Lagado and the filth of the Yahoos. The Houyhnhnms represent the order of mind at its purest, free of rationalistic system-building or of pride in intellectual constructions. Conceived in this way, it contains much that human beings also possess, but to achieve its equivalent in the human world requires an arduous endeavour.

VII

The problem raised by the book. Gulliver embodies the chronic tendency of the mind to over-simplify experience, a tendency that takes, with equal ease, the form of complacency or of misanthropy. Given his tendency to see man as either a rational animal or an irrational beast, given his expectation that man will be essentially good or essentially evil, Gulliver can never comprehend the problematic nature of man as man really is. As Swift sees him, man

is both blessed and cursed with the condition of *animal rationis capax*.* Because he is capable of reason, man can at least glimpse moral truth. Because he is less than perfect in reason, he can lose the vision or pervert its meaning. *Gulliver's Travels* is a book which raises the question of how much that we call civilization is an imperfect disguise of our lowest appetites rather than a true sublimation or transformation of those appetites. It also raises the question of how far this civilization is necessary to the man who lives a purely moral life, adhering rigorously to the precepts of nature and reason only. This is the same problem raised, though casually, in Swift's *Argument Against Abolishing Christianity*.

VIII

The character of Gulliver, the narrator. The first character to attract our attention in *Gulliver's Travels* is Gulliver himself. He is the narrator and the principal actor. We look at things through his eyes ; we feel his feelings and we share his thoughts. We remain in Gulliver's company from beginning till end, and it is important that we should come to know him as quickly as possible. Gulliver is first of all a bit of a bore, because his mind is irritatingly circumstantial and unimaginative, as is evident in the very beginning of the book when he gives us numerous insignificant biographical details. Gradually, however, we come to like him and to enjoy his company. In all respects, he is an average good man. He has received some university education both at Cambridge and at Leyden where he studied medicine. He is observant, reasonably intelligent, thoroughly capable in an emergency, brave, and hopeful. He is somewhat lacking in imagination and inventiveness, but that is a merit from our point of view, because we can be sure that what he tells us, no matter how strange, is true. He is simple and direct in his narration. He retains his benevolence throughout the first three voyages, though it is a pity that such a good-natured, honest Englishman should at last grow sick and morbid and should be driven mad.

Gulliver, not to be identified with Swift. Such is the man called Gulliver. But we should guard against thinking him to be Jonathan Swift. The meaning of the book is completely distorted if we identify the Gulliver of the last voyage with the author of the book, and if we attribute Gulliver's misanthropy to Swift himself. Gulliver is an objective, dramatic character, not to be identified with Swift just as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* is not to be identified with Shakespeare. Gulliver acts and is acted upon ; he changes ; he grows in the course of his adventures. He begins in simplicity, develops into sophistication, and ends in madness.

IX

Pigmies and giants in the first two voyages. It was a stroke of genius on the part of Swift to send Gulliver off to an unknown country, Lilliput, where the inhabitants are tiny creatures of the

i.e., an animal capable of becoming rational.

size of his thumb. It was a fairy-tale idea that had always appealed to children all over the world. In Part II of the book, Swift reverses the idea and gives us the converse by way of contrast. In the second unknown country, the kingdom of Brobdingnag, Gulliver himself is the diminutive man in a land where the inhabitants are giants, twelve times his size.

Satire on political and religious conflicts. Looking at human beings first through the wrong end of a telescope, making them look small, and then looking at them through a magnifying glass so that we see them monstrously big with their faults and failings enlarged—this was a wonderful way of exposing the silliness of politics. Swift is here engaged in exposing party-conflicts, the quarrels about little things that occupy so much of human activity and energy which could be better employed. There are the conflicts between Big-Endians and Little-Endians, as to which end to break open an egg. By this Swift meant the conflicts between Catholics (Big-Endians) and Protestants (Little-Endians) in which so many thousands of valuable lives had been lost.

Satire on wars. Wars between nations are also held up to ridicule, and regarded as senseless. The war between Lilliput and the neighbouring Blefuscu, for example, is a satirical exposure of the constant wars waged between England and France. In one of these, the war which lasted for almost the entire period of Queen Anne's reign, Swift played a manly part in urging peace, and in defending it when it was made by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. For this practical and public-spirited purpose, Swift, who had been brought up as a Whig, became a Tory. He knew the ways of politicians through and through, and showed them up in the first two Parts of *Gulliver's Travels*.

Swift's use of irony in his satire. Swift's aim in this book, then, was not so much to entertain and amuse as to satirize, to hold up a mirror to people's pettiness, their foibles and failings, and bring them to their senses. To this end, the medium employed by Swift is irony of which Swift was the greatest master. Irony consists in expressing something in a clever and amusing manner, putting it obliquely, deviously, and with a solemn face. Intelligent people catch the joke, and get a laugh out of it. Bound up with his irony is the perfection of Swift's style. He is one of the classic masters of English prose.

Satire on theoreticians. Part III of the book takes Gulliver to the floating island of Laputa, a satellite held in orbit over the larger island of Balnibarbi. This section has had the least popular appeal, although it is the funniest. The targets of satire in this section are the scientists, projectors, academics, planners, intellectuals, critics, all the people in fact who proceed according to theory and are useless when it comes to actual practice. Part III of Swift's book is even more to the point today than when it was written. Swift

had a loathing for delusions and was always on the alert to puncture humbug.

The Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos in Part IV. Gulliver's fourth journey is to the country of the Houyhnhnms. (The word "Houyhnhnm" by its very sound represents the whinnying or neighing of horses.) This country is inhabited by horses who are the rulers, and by Yahoos who are a degraded lot of brutes and who have to serve the horses as and when required to do so. Everybody recognizes the horse for a noble animal ; and the first thing about the country of the Houyhnhnms is that there is no word for lying or falsehood. Horses do not tell lies ; human beings do. Yahoos are a caricature of men, with all the good in human beings left out. Swift had, indeed, an extremely low opinion of mankind in general. In the country of the horses, there is no internecine warfare. Besides, the Houyhnhnms control their population, unlike the Yahoos or the human beings. In the country of the Houyhnhnm's the idea of human beings castrating horses is intolerable and quite unnecessary ; there it is the Yahoos who need to be castrated. Swift implies that, if only human beings use sexual restraint, drastic methods to control population would not be necessary.

X

Two opposed views about Part IV. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* has become the subject of a dispute between two opposing groups of critics. On one side are the critics who take the traditional view of the Houyhnhnms, solemnly seeing them as ideal creatures, and on the other side are the critics who see the portrayal of the Houyhnhnms to be ironic. There are also some critics who seem to hold the traditional view but who tend also to see some irony in the portrayal of the Houyhnhnms. One critic of this middle category, for instance, says : "There are moments when we have to ask ourselves whether our imaginary voyage is not becoming a parody of itself—whether the Utopian elements are not slyly humorous.

Strong arguments on both sides. There are strong arguments on both sides—on the side of the idealistic view of the Houyhnhnms and on the side of the ironic view ; and it is most unlikely that a resolution will ever come about through the breakdown of one side or the other.

Intermingling of burlesque and solemn elements. Burlesque elements and solemn elements are sometimes subtly intermingled in Part IV, and at other times whole sections are given over to one or the other. The latter half of Chapter 8 and the latter half of Chapter 9 are given over to a solemn praise of the noble race of the Houyhnhnms, and the burlesque side is almost absent. But Gulliver's denunciation of the people of European countries in

Chapters 5 and 6, bitter as it is, is almost exclusively shocking burlesque—an insulting caricature of the entire race of human beings. The scene where Gulliver listens in awe to the wise parlour-conversations of a group of Houyhnhnms sitting on their haunches is an excellent example of the way the solemn and the burlesque elements can work together. The Houyhnhnms are truly admirable in this scene even though the sight of horses outdoing a man in the parlour is both humorous and humiliating.

The burlesque equation between man and Yahoo. The main shock of Part IV is the burlesque equation between man and Yahoo which underlies the last three chapters. This burlesque equation begins early in Part IV when Gulliver and a Yahoo are placed side by side and the similarities noted. Then, after Gulliver's denunciation of the Europeans, the master Houyhnhnm describes, almost point for point, similar peculiar practices among the Yahoos. Finally, when Gulliver is sexually attacked by a female Yahoo, the burlesque equation between man and Yahoo is complete, and the burlesque (as opposed to the solemn) superiority of horse-shaped creatures over man-shaped creatures is fixed for ever in Gulliver's mind. Thereafter Gulliver has only contempt for those with man-shaped bodies, no matter how good they are.

Don Pedro versus the Houyhnhnms. It is often argued that the kind and generous Don Pedro* is as good morally as the Houyhnhnms, and many have argued that he is much better. The argument is beside the point, because we are dealing with a burlesque satirical attack. The vital factor is the fact that Don Pedro is man-shaped and not horse-shaped. We are supposed to be shocked, embarrased, humiliated, and insulted as we realize that even the cleanest and most virtuous human beings give out bad odours and seem grossly inferior when compared with those who are horse-shaped. Looking at the Houyhnhnms solemnly, we can see a big difference between Don Pedro and Yahoo, but we are supposed to go along with a burlesque satire which is based upon the fantasy that any man returning from the Houyhnhnm-land would find all man-shaped creatures to be hideous and all horse-shaped creatures to be beautiful.

No incompatibility between solemn and burlesque elements. The combination of solemn and burlesque elements in Part IV, far from being incompatible, support and reinforce each other. Even in the most laughable Houyhnhnms situation the other side of these creatures, their solemn side, is there to haunt us and accentuate the satire, for we recognize that the superiority of the Houyhnhnms is not always a burlesque superiority. Conversely, the burlesque side of the Houyhnhnms prevents their solemn side from becoming oppressively solemn at any time.

*the Captain of the Portuguese ship which picks up Gulliver.

XI

The compassionate satirical wrath of Swift. Swift can be despicable. He can also be wrong-headed, short-sighted, or narrow-minded. But when he lashes the world most brutally for its depravity and destructiveness, the moral energy is indistinguishable from the compassion which informs it, and it is this compassionate satirical wrath which makes Swift live still for us.

His assertion of faith despite his dark view. In his satires Swift rarely makes this compasssion explicit ; it is implied most of all in the demands he makes of his readers. In the Preface to *The Battle of the Books* he satirically defines satire : "Satire is a sort of glass, wherein beholders do generally discover everybody's face but their own ; which is the chief reason for that kind of reception it meets in the world, and that so very few are offended with it." This is not the only place where he pretends that his only wish is to hurt. In a famous letter to Pope he declares that "the chief end I propose to myself in all my labours is to vex the world rather than divert it". But satire simply to vex or offend would be the manner of Timon which he rejects in the same letter : a much graver kind of irresponsibility than merely to amuse the world. In the same letter he writes to Pope of his mock project for a treatise "proving the falsity of the definition *animal rationale** ; and to show that it should only be *rationis capax*†". The real significance of this is not in the denial that man is a rational animal, but in the assertion of faith that man is capable of choosing reason. We ought to qualify "vex" and "offend" with "amend". In August, 1725 he wrote exultantly to his friend Charles Ford, "I have finished my *Travels*, and am now transcribing them ; they are admirable things and will wonderfully mend the world." In short, Swift's satire is designed to shock the reader into a new awareness of himself and of the follies and vices which he shares with the rest of mankind.

Gulliver's shifting role. Swift adopts many different strategies in his satires, but all of them have something in common. He dramatizes a human vice or folly in such a way that the reader can perceive the degree to which he himself may share it, but also gives the reader the opportunity to see the vice or folly for what it is. This involves the need to persuade the reader into a very special relationship with the writer on the one hand and what is written on the other hand. In his satires Swift usually affects to retire into the background and hand over responsibility to a *persona*. Many modern writes on Swift, perceiving this, have tended to exaggerate the consistency of his narrative technique in this respect. Gulliver, for instance, shifts in his role many times. Sometimes he is the sensible, moderate, even wise observer, sometimes the

**i.e.*, rational animal.

†*i.e.*, (an animal) capable of becoming rational.

vicious and feeble figure who carries with him, everywhere he goes, all the follies and inadequacies of mankind. He is never important in himself, never the subject but the vehicle for moral questioning. He is never simply or completely a representative of the reader, or the author, or mankind in general, but always the means by which Swift manoeuvres the reader into a way of seeing the fiction, seeing himself and seeing humanity.

XII

Two different sides of human nature presented to the reader. The charge against Swift which has gained most general credit is that of perfect misanthropy ; and this is chiefly founded upon his supposed satire on human nature in the picture he has drawn of the Yahoos. But it may be asked to what end has such an odious animal been produced to view. The answer is obvious : the design of the author, in the whole of this apologue, is to place before our eyes a picture of two different parts of the human frame, detached from each other, in order that we may the better estimate the true value of each, and see the necessity there is that the one should have an absolute command over the other. In our merely animal capacity, says he to us, without reason to guide us, and actuated only by a blind instinct he will show us that we would be degraded below the beasts of the field. That very form, that very body which we are so proud of, as giving us such a superiority over all other animals owe all their beauty and all their greatest powers to their being actuated by a rational soul. Let that be withdrawn, let the body be inhabited by the mind of a brute, we would in that case be the most deformed, the most detestable of all creatures as to our external appearance ; and as to our internal nature, filled with all the evil dispositions and malignant passions of mankind, we would be the most miserable of beings, living in a continued state of internal vexation and of hatred and warfare with each other.

The lesson to be drawn. On the other hand, the author shows us another picture of an animal endowed with a rational soul and acting uniformly according to the dictates of reason. Here we may see collected all the virtues, all the great qualities, which dignify human nature and constitute the happiness of human life. The natural inference to be drawn from these two different representations is a lesson to us, warning us not to suffer the animal part to become predominant in ourselves, lest we should resemble the vile Yahoos, and fall into vice and misery, but to emulate the noble and generous Houyhnhnms, by cultivating the rational faculty to the utmost, which will lead us to a life of virtue and happiness.

10

Contemporary Allusions in "Gulliver's Travels"

The desirability of having a historical personality in one's mind. *Gulliver's Travels* contains a large number of allusions to contemporary political personalities and events. Many figures which seem to be imaginary to us were based on real persons. In one of his earlier writings, Swift said : "In describing the virtues and vices of mankind, it is convenient to have some eminent person in our eye, from whence we copy our description." In other words, a satirist may look into history for some character bearing a resemblance to the person he wishes to describe and attack in his writing. At the same time Swift admitted that this method of writing had one serious drawback : "Though the present age may understand well enough the little hints we give, the parallels we draw, and the characters we describe, yet this will all be lost to the next."

Main events of the time. *Gulliver's Travels* was most probably written during the period 1720-1725. Political allusions in this book are to the events of the end of Queen Anne's reign, and to events during the reign of George I. Naturally, events which took place during the years in which the book was completed left most traces on it. In England the main events of the time were the South Sea Bubble (1720), the return to office of Walpole (1721), the return from exile of Bolingbroke (1723), the removal of Carteret from the English cabinet (1724), the supremacy of Walpole in it (1725). In Ireland during the same period the struggle over Wood's patent began and ended (1722 to 25).

England in the disguise of Lilliput in Part I of the book. References to public events and public personalities are most frequent in Parts I and III of *Gulliver's Travels.* The voyage to Lilliput in Part I of the book contains the story of Gulliver's shipwreck and his early adventures among the pigmies. In this part, as soon as Swift turns to describe the politics of Lilliput, that country ceases to be a kind of Utopia and becomes the England of Swift's time. A

Lilliputian lord tells Gulliver : "We labour under two mighty evils—a violent faction at home and the danger of an invasion by a most potent enemy from abroad." The Lilliputian lord goes on to refer to the two struggling parties, one party distinguished by its high-heeled shoes and the other by its low-heeled shoes. The reference obviously is to the High Church and Low Church parties, or the Tories and the Whigs. The potent enemy from abroad is the island of Blefuscu which stands for France with whom England had been engaged in an obstinate struggle for a whole generation. Thus, the story of Gulliver's first voyage becomes a kind of political allegory. The Emperor of Lilliput would in that case be a portrayal of George I who is a supporter of the Whigs by his determination to make use of only low-heels in the administration of the government, and himself wearing heels lower than any member of his court. The parallel is emphasized by making the heir to the throne show an inclination towards high-heels, as the Prince of Wales did to the Tories of the time. Finally, Swift adds an ironical passage on the leniency and mercy of the Emperor intended to remind his readers of the executions which had taken place after the rebellion in 1715, and the praises of King George's mercy which the government had published.

The allegorical meaning of the Empress's annoyance with Gulliver. The incident of Gulliver's extinguishing a fire in the apartment of the Lilliputian Empress relates to the circumstances in Swift's own life. The Lilliputian Empress was filled with resentment at Gulliver's action in extinguishing the fire by urinating upon it, and she decided never again to make use of that apartment. This incident is an allegorical representation of the fact that Queen Anne was so disgusted with Swift's *A Tale of a Tub* that, in spite of Swift's political services, she could never be prevailed upon to promote Swift to a higher office in the Church. The result of Queen Anne's annoyance was that Swift failed to obtain the position of a bishop which he hoped to get in 1708 ; and it was with great difficulty that he got the office of a dean in 1713. Swift also believed that Queen Anne was "a royal prude", and that her opposition to his promotion was due to the efforts of his enemies. In one of his poems, Swift names the Duches of Somerset, the Archbishop of York, the Earl of Nottingham, and Robert Walpole as his enemies.

The Earl of Nottingham in the guise of Bolgolam. In *Gulliver's Travels* the principal enemy of Gulliver is a certain lord named Bolgolam. Another enemy is described by Gulliver as "a person well versed in affairs, but of a morose and sour complexion". This person is clearly intended to represent the Earl of Nottingham. The morose and sour complexion attributed to Bolgolam in the book at once suggests the identification. In 1711, when Nottingham had joined the Whigs in their attack on the foreign policy of the government, Swift had written two poems against him. Nottingham had retaliated by using his influence at the court to stop Swift's promotion, and then had openly condemned him in parliament.

Bolingbroke in Swift's mind. Another statesman who figures in Gulliver's account of the circumstances and conditions prevailing in Lilliput is Bolingbroke. Bolingbroke was very much in Swift's mind in 1719 and 1720. Bolingbroke was at that time in exile, and Swift was in correspondence with him in 1719 when there was some hope of Bolingbroke's pardon and his return to England, though the hope was not realized till 1723. During that period several long letters were exchanged between them. It was towards the end of 1721 that Swift mentioned his book to Bolingbroke who replied that he longed to see the book, namely *Gulliver's Travels*.

The close parallel between Bolingbroke and Gulliver. In the book itself, there is a close parallel between the fate of Bolingbroke and that of Gulliver. Like Gulliver, Bolingbroke had brought a great war to an end and concluded a peace upon conditions very advantageous to his country, but was denounced by his political opponents for not prosecuting the war to bring about the complete surrender of the enemy. Bolingbroke was accused of treasonable intercourse with French ambassadors, just as Gulliver in the book is accused of treasonable intercourse with the ambassadors of Blefuscu. Gulliver flees from Lilliput because he feels that he cannot obtain a fair trial, "having in my life perused many State trials which I ever observed to terminate as the judges thought fit to direct." Gulliver is aware that powerful enemies in Lilliput seek to have him killed. Now, Bolingbroke had declared that he had fled from England because he had definite information that some powerful political opponents wanted to have him executed. It is obvious, then, that in this part of the book Gulliver is attributing to himself the circumstances of Bolingbroke.

Sir Robert Walpole in the guise of Flimnap. Closely connected with the portrayal of Bolingbroke is that of Sir Robert Walpole who is represented in the book under the name of Flimnap. One of the important features of political life in Lilliput is that candidates for high offices have to compete by dancing on a tight rope. Flimnap, the Lord Treasurer of Lilliput, has himself to display his skill in this art (of dancing on a tight rope). Flimnap's skill symbolizes Walpole's dexterity in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues. When Flimnap, after an attempted high jump, falls down, he is saved from breaking his neck by the King's cushion. This cushion is intended to symbolize the Duches of Kendal who was one of King George I's mistresses and by whose influence Walpole was restored to royal favour after his fall from power in 1717.

The silken threads in Lilliput symbolic of English distinctions. Then there is the custom in Lilliput of awarding silken threads of green, red, and blue colours to those courtiers who showed the greatest agility in leaping over or creeping under a stick. The green thread represents the Order of the Thistle, which was revived by Queen Anne in 1703. The red thread represents the Order of the Bath, which was revived by George I in 1725. Its revival was due

to Walpole's initiative. The blue thread represents the Order of the Garter which was bestowed on Walpole himself in 1726, after which he became known to satirists by the title of Sir Blue-String.

The alleged love-affair between Gulliver and Flimnap's wife. One passage in Gulliver's account of his experiences in Lilliput is difficult to explain. This passage describes Flimnap's jealousy of his wife who is reported to have developed a love-affair with Gulliver. The scandal involving Gulliver and Flimnap's wife aggravates Flimnap's hostility to Gulliver. This episode in Part I of the book seems to be an ironical attack by Swift on Walpole whose first wife, Catherine, was not above suspicion, while Walpole's indifference to her flirtations was notorious. But it is also possible that the episode in question is a veiled reference to Bolingbroke's attempt to win the favour of the Duchess of Kendal, hitherto Walpole's firmest ally, in order to utilize her influence with George I to Walpole's detriment.

Lord Carteret in the guise of Reldresal. Besides Flimnap, another minister of the Lilliputian court is Reldresal, Principal Secretary for Private Affairs. Reldresal is the lord who explains to Gulliver the intricacies of Lilliputian politics and proves himself throughout Gulliver's true friend. It is clear that Reldresal is meant to represent Lord Carteret who was Secretary of State from 1721 to 1724 and who stood very high in King George I's favour. It has been suggested that Townshend was the man represented by Reldresal, but as Carteret was Swift's friend, he must be the person meant. In April, 1724 Walpole got rid of Carteret by making him Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In that capacity Carteret was obliged to issue a proclamation offering a reward for the discovery of the author* of the *Drapier's Letters to the People of Ireland*, just as Reldresal was obliged to suggest a method punishing his friend Gulliver.

Contemporary allusions in the voyage to Brobdingnag. In the voyage to Brobdingnag, there are no references to actual contemporary persons, while the allusions to contemporary politics are only general. Some of the institutions and customs of Brobdingnag are briefly described and praised ; for instance, the brevity of the laws, the cultivation of useful knowledge rather than speculative philosophy or abstract sciences, and the simplicity of the literary style in fashion. The method adopted throughout is not to hold up ideal institutions for imitation as in the case of Lilliput, but to describe existing institutions so as to show their defects. In five interviews Gulliver explains to the King the constitution and government of England, and then the King, by doubts, queries, and objections, forces him to reveal the difference between the practice and the theory of the institutions described. Gulliver has to admit that the working of the parliamentary government is vitiated by the methods

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*The author was Swift. See chapter I : "Jonthan Swift : A Biographical Sketch."

of selecting peers, bishops, and members of the House of Commons, so that, as the King points out, the original idea of the institution is "blurred and blotted by corruptions".

The political views of the Tories of the time. The comments of the King of Brobdingnag express the political views of Swift's party on many questions. The King is amazed to hear Gulliver talk of a mercenary army in the midst of peace and among a free people. Every year, over the Mutiny Act or the Estimates, the House of Commons resounded with denunciations of standing armies, and Lord Chesterfield recommended the issue to his son as the best subject for a young member's maiden speech. In the same way the King of Brobdingnag echoes the criticisms of the Tories on the financial system and their alarm at the existence of the national debt.

The King of Brobdingnag as Swift's mouthpiece on contemporary topics. On must questions the King is not merely the mouthpiece of the Tory party but of Swift; and the opinions the King expresses are those which Swift had already stated in his pamphlets. Swift's condemnation of gambling, his complaint of the neglected education of the upper classes, his theory of the best way of treating Dissenters and his rooted animosity to lawyers, all find expression through the King. Similarly, a view which Swift had expressed in one of his letters finds an epigrammatic expression by the King in the following words:

> "Whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together."

At the back of Swift's mind there is always the thought of Ireland. In a letter written in 1732 he made his meaning still more clear. In that letter he wrote: "There is not an acre of land in Ireland turned to half its advantage, yet it is better improved than the people; and all these evils are effects of English tyranny, so your sons and grand-children will find it to their sorrow."

The allusion to Dublin beggars. There is another passage in Part II suggested by Irish conditions, and that is an incident in Gulliver's visit to the capital of Brobdingnag. As the carriage, in which he and his nurse are being conveyed, stops at a shop, the beggars who were waiting for an opportunity crowd around the carriage and present "the most horrible spectacle that ever an European eye beheld". Gulliver then describes with horrid minuteness the sores on their bodies. There can be no doubt that this piece of description was inspired by the beggars of Dublin about whom Swift had much to say in his pamphlets and sermons. Such passages show that, while Swift was entirely wrapped up in English politics when he wrote Part I of the book, Irish social conditions were beginning to occupy his thoughts when Part II was written.

II

Allusions to political personalities and events. Swift's philosophy forms only one part of *Gulliver's Travels*. The book is stuffed with personal, literary, and political allusions. On every page there are more or less abstruse references which had a special meaning for the reader of Swift's own time. For instance, in Part I, Lilliput and its diminutive people represent England ; Blefuscu is France ; Flimnap , the Treasurer, is Swift's old enemy, Sir Robert Walpole, whereas Gulliver, for the most part, is Swift's old friend, Bolingbroke, who made the Peace of Utrecht with the French and then was shamefully exiled by an ungrateful nation. The well-known scene where Gulliver puts out the fire in the imperial palace by urinating on it was once thought to portray Swift's service to the English Church when he wrote *A Tale of a Tub*. That book was devoted to the cause of the Church but it was written in such a manner that Queen Anne was shocked and vowed ever after to refuse its author a bishopric*. Now, however, the interpretation has changed. It is now argued that the incident represents the stopping of the terrible war against France by unavoidable methods, however deplorable those methods might have been.

Not essential to know conditions in the 18th century. It may, however, be pointed out that, for the understanding of *Gulliver's Travels*, it is not essential to have a detailed knowledge of the political and social circumstances of the times of Queen Anne, or to know at first hand that distant world of treason and war, of intrigue and apostasy, of power-crazed soldiers and cunning politicians. A knowledge of the political and social conditions in some of the countries in the twentieth century would be enough to understand Swift's portrayal in *Gulliver's Travels* of the various aspects of life in the eighteenth century.

III

Scientific allusions in Part II. The scientific projects described in Part III show Swift's acquaintance with a large variety of current projects and experiments and with the work of the members of the Royal Society, while the flying island owes something both to Gilbert's theories of magnetism and the contemporary discussion arising in connection with Halley's comet.

Political personalities in Part I. There are recognizable elements of political allegory present in both Parts I and III, the allusions being to people and events in the England of Queen Anne and King George I. Some of the references are unmistakable ; there are others which are open to different interpretations. There is general agreement that the latter part of Gulliver's experiences in Lilliput—the ingratitude he meets with after performing the signal feat of capturing the enemy's entire fleet, the

*Bishopric : the position or office of a bishop. (Swift's desire to become a bishop was never fulfilled. He remained the Dean of St. Patrick's Church.)

sentence passed on him, and his flight to the neighbouring kingdom of Blefuscu—is a thinly-veiled allegory of Bolingbroke's fate subsequent to the Queen's death. It is also clear that Bolgolam points to the Earl of Nottingham, and Flimnap to Walpole, while Reldresal represents Charles, Viscount Townshend, who succeeded Bolingbroke as Secretary of State.

Political events in Part I. All of Gulliver's adventures during the first voyage have been regarded by some critics as a hidden history of Oxford-Bolingbroke ministry. The shipwreck in Chapter 1 takes us back to the reverse suffered by Harley and St. John in 1708, two years before they came to power. Bolgolam's animosity to Gulliver represents Nottingham's opposition to the Tory Ministry late in 1711. The fire in the Queen's palace represents the War of Spanish Succession, and Gulliver's extinguishing of it is the peace negotiated by Bolingbroke and Oxford. The articles of impeachment drawn up against Gulliver represent the charges made against Oxford and Bolingbroke after the Queen's death.

The political allegory in Part III. The allegory of Part I seems to have been carried forward in Part III into the reign of George I and to shadow forth the lamentable state of affairs brought to pass by the Whigs. The flying island does undoubtedly signify England, or at least the power of the State and the tyrannical exercise of such power. The story of the rebellion in Lindalino*—or Dublin—and the manner in which it defended itself against the King and the island hovering overhead refer no doubt to the Wood affair and Ireland's successful resistance to the patent. The character of Munodi was probably created with Oxford in mind, and the abandoned mill on his estate is very likely a symbol of the South Sea enterprise, established under Oxford but going down to ruin under the Whigs in 1720.

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*The repetition of "lin" in this name refers to "lin" in "Dub*lin*".

11

"Gulliver's Travels" : The Four Voyages in Brief

The ridiculousness of the Lilliputians. The first part of *Gulliver's Travels* is occupied with Lilliput. This has always been the most popular portion of *Gulliver's Travels*, and it has added a word to the language, the word "Lilliputian" which means something diminutive or small. "Lilliputian" implies that human society and its affairs have been made to look ridiculous by being represented as very small. Those who know the history of Swift's time can detect the references in this part of the book to real events and persons. In the preparatory letter by Captain Gulliver, Dampier is referred to by name as his cousin and his book cited by its title. The Emperor of Lilliput has reigned seven years, and so had George I when Swift wrote his book. The inventory of the contents of Gulliver's pockets, when the "Man-Mountain" is examined, is a parody of the findings of the secret committee to examine the Jacobite dealings of Oxford, Bolingbroke, and Ormond. The qualification for high office is rope-dancing, at which the most skilful performer is Flimnap who represents Walpole (the Prime Minister of England at that time).

Awards and titles in Lilliput. The prizes awarded were coloured ribbons which represent the ribbons of the Order of the Garter, the Thistle, and the Bath. They were sheer nonsense. But since donkeys need carrots to be lured, Walpole had introduced or invented the Order of the Bath. There were not enough Garters to go round for the assess who wanted them. It caused a lot of heart-burning to those who were not awarded a Garter. So Walpole created what his clever son Horace called a "bank" of honours—a red ribbon instead of a blue—as a compensation to unsuccessful candidates, and condescended to accept a red ribbon himself, instead of a blue, to set the example and to encourage others.

The Big-Endians and the little-Endians. A civil war was waged between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians, on the vital issue whether to break an egg at the big end or the small end. In these disputes one emperor lost his life, another his crown. The two emperors are obviously Charles I and James II :

"It is computed that eleven thousand persons have, at several times, suffered death rather than submit to break their eggs at the smaller end. Many hundred large volumes have been published upon this controversy; but the books of Big-Endians have been long forbidden, and the whole party rendered incapable by law of holding employments."

This refers to the proscription of Catholics by Protestants after the Reformation, and the hundreds of volumes of senseless religious controversy. Of course, Catholics had burnt to death thousands of people for denying the "truth" of Transubstantiation, as Protestants had hanged hundreds of Catholics for upholding Papal supremacy. Eleven thousand in Lilliput was a small number compared with those who killed, or were killed, for these stupid disputes. Here they were reduced to their proper perspective.

Gulliver's act of extinguishing a fire. At the Royal court of Lilliput, Gulliver extinguished a fire in the Empress's apartment by urinating upon it. He was not forgiven for this:

"The Empress, conceiving the greatest abhorrence of what I had done, removed to the most distant side of the court, firmly resolved that those buildings should never be repaired for her use and, in the presence of her chief confidants, could not forbear vowing revenge." (Page 92)

Queen Anne's confidant in religious matter was Archbishop Sharp. (In *A Tale of a Tub*, Swift had urinated on their religious beliefs.)

Absurd beliefs of the Lilliputians. The beliefs of the people of Lilliput were absurd:

"They bury their dead with their head directly downwards because they hold an opinion that, in eleven thousand moons, they are all to rise again, in which period the earth—which they conceive to be flat—will turn upside down; and by this means they shall, at their resurrection, be found ready standing on their feet. The learned among them confess the absurdity of this doctrine, but the practice still continues, in compliance to the vulgar." (Page 94)

We are not told exactly what this implies as to the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, but Swift makes very clear the obvious distinction between what is thought by the intelligent sections of society and what is believed be the idiotic people.

Their views about children. The people of the Lilliput did not recognize that a child had any obligation to his parents for bringing him into the world because, considering the miseries of human life, to beget a child was neither a benefit in itself nor intended to be so by the parents whose thoughts during the sexual

intercourse were otherwise occupied. The second proposition is true enough. Hence the conclusion. They tought that nothing could be more unjust than for the people, in subservience to their own appetites, to bring children into the world and leave the burden of supporting them to the public. In Lilliput, poor people contributed a small portion of their monthly income, by way of insurance, to maintain their own children. (We can imagine what Swift would have thought of today's society where people have devised all kinds of insurance and where they have recourse to it from birth till death.)

The reversal of the scale in Brobdingnag. Gulliver had set sail on his second voyage in a ship commanded by a Cornishman, Captain John Nicholas, in 1702. East of the Moluccas they were driven off course in a great storm which gave Swift the opportunity to incorporate a page of technical sea-terms, which is very laughable. They were driven "five hundred leagues to the east, so that the oldest sailor on board could not tell in what part of the world we were". They held on course till they discovered the land of Brobdingnag. In this new land of giants, Gulliver looked small like a Lilliputian. The scale was reversed in the other direction, so that the horrors for a human being were magnified. A child in this new land picked up the tiny-looking Gulliver to play with, as if Gulliver were a toy. Gulliver at this time felt afraid lest the horrid child might do some harm to him like mischievous children treating young birds callously.

The disgusting features of the Brobdingnagians. The large scale of Brobdingnag showed up human imperfections under the magnifying glass. A woman giving suck to a child disgusted Gulliver by her exposed breast :

> "It (the breast) stood prominent six feet, and could not be less than sixteen in circumference. The nipple was about half the bigness of my head, and the hue both of that and the dug so varified with spots, pimples, and freckles that nothing could appear more nauseous." (Page 130)

This enabled Swift to reflect on the fair skin of English ladies who appeared so beautiful because they were of the normal human size, and because their defects were not seen through a magnifying glass. (Swift applied the magnifying glass in some of his poems, such as *The Progress of Beauty* and *A Beautiful Young Nymph Going to Bed*, in which he undresses a woman completely, with her false hair, false eyebrows, false teeth, and false complexion, and where the so-called nymph is revealed as a poxed prostitute.) In Brobdingnag, size showed up every horror. Here is another example :

> "There was a woman with a cancer in her breast, swelled to a monstrous size, full of holes, in two or three of which

> I could have easily crept. There was a fellow with a wen in his neck, larger than five wool-packs. But the most hateful sight of all was the lice crawling on their clothes. I could see distinctly the limbs of these vermin with my naked eye, much better than those of a European louse through a microscope, and their snouts with which they rooted like swine." (Page 151)

The maids of honour. Smells were similarly heightened and aggravated. The maids of honour at the court

> "would often strip me naked from top to toe, and lay me at full length in their bosoms, wherewith I was much disgusted because, to say the truth, a very offensive smell came from their skins." (Page 157)

He (Gulliver) believed that to their lovers in Brobdingnag these maids of honour must be perfectly agreeable and acceptable. One of these large creatures took liberties with Gulliver. She was a playful girl of sixteen who would sometimes set him astride upon one of her nipples, and play many other tricks.

Gulliver's account of English institutions. The King of Brobdingnag inquired into the institutions of Gulliver's native country, particularly into parliament. Gulliver described the House of Lords, with lords temporal and lords spiritual. (The eighteenth-century House of Lords was much smaller, immensely more powerful than now-a-days, and the bishops formed a very important part of it.) With reference to the lords spiritual, Gulliver gave the following piece of information to the King :

> "These were searched and sought out through the whole nation among such of the priesthood as were most deservedly distinguished by the sanctity of their lives, and the depth of their erudition : who were indeed the spiritual fathers of the clergy and the people." (Page 168)

As for the House of Commons, Gulliver described its members as "principal gentlemen", selected by the people "for their great abilities and love of their country, to represent the wisdom of the whole nation".

The King's comments on parliamentary institutions. The King of Brobdingnag was not impressed by Gulliver's account. The King wanted to know why people were so anxious to get into parliament. Would not an outsider with more money prevail on the vulgar voters against the better man ? Was the claim to greater public spirit always sincere, and was not humbug more successful ? The King could not also understand how a country could become bankrupt and run short of funds like any private individual. The King asked who were the creditors of Gulliver's country.

The King's views about the art of government. One day, when Gulliver happened to say that there were several thousand books in his country written upon the art of government, the King formed a very low opinion of the understanding of Gulliver's countrymen. The King did not think that the government needed endless discussion and dispute. What the government needed most was common sense, reason, a sense of fairness and a capacity for quick action. According to the King, whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a piece of ground where only one grew before, would be doing more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together.

More diversified targets of satire in Part III. The voyage to Laputa was made in a ship commanded again by a Cornishman, this time a man called William Robinson. This third part of *Gulliver's Travels* has more diversity and a less unified impact than the other three parts, and has from the beginning been less appreciated. Its targets are more deversified or, we might say, more specialized. Some critics find it the most diverting portion of the book, and even more suited to targets of present-day relevance.

Philosophial people of Laputa. The inhabitants of Laputa were philosophers. "There heads were all inclined either to the right or to the left, one of their eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the zenith". The minds of those people were so occupied with intense speculations that they could neither speak nor attend to the discourse of others, unless their attention was attracted by a flapper* hitting them with a blown-up bladder. They were so wrapped in cogitation and so absent-minded, that they needed a flapper to prevent them from falling off the pavement.

Their interest in mathematics. The court in Laputa was devoted to mathematics. The King paid no attention to the intruder from another sphere, for "he was then deep in a problem, and we attended at least an hour before he could solve it". When dinner appeared, "there was a shoulder of mutton, cut into an equilateral triangle, a piece of beef into a rhomboid†, and a pudding into a cycloid**." Clothes were scientifically calculated. When a suit was made for Gulliver, the tailor first took his altitude with a quadrant, and then with a rule and compasses described the dimensions and outlines of his whole body, all which he wrote down upon a paper ; and in six days brought his clothes very ill made, and quite out of shape because the tailor had made a mistake in the calculation. However, such accidents being very frequent, Gulliver did not feel uneasy about the matter.

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*flapper : a person who jogs or stimulates the memory or the understanding of somebody else.

†A rhomboid is a figure having the shape of a rhomb which means an oblique equilateral parallelogram.

**A cycloid is a curve traced by a point on a radius of a circle within or without its circumference, as the circle rolls along a straight line.

The defects of these people. In Laputa people did not make their own music ; they listened only to the music of the spheres. The houses of these intellectual people were very ill-constructed, with the walls sloping, without one right angle in any apartment, this defect being due to the contempt which those people felt for practical geometry which they despised as vulgar and mechanical. Gulliver goes on to say that these people were "dexterous enough upon a piece of paper in the management of the rule, the pencil, and the divider" but that he had never seen "a more clumsy, awkward, and unhandy people, nor so slow and perplexed upon all other subjects".

Conceited and arrogant. These intellectuals, so useless in the practical concerns of life, were yet intolerably conceited and arrogant about public affairs. They were for ever arguing and discussing, "giving their judgments in matters of state, and passionately disputing every inch of a party opinion". Swift here makes an acute observation. The disciplines of mathematics and politics, and the abilities required for either, are utterly different, so that those who are qualified for one are practically disqualified for the other.

Impractical schemes. Naturally, in a society run by such intellectuals, their subject country of Balnibarbi was neglected and in a squalid, run-down condition, while they were given up to their projects. Some of the resources in Lagado (the capital of Balnibarbi) went into extracting sun-beams out of cucumbers. Then there was the agricultural projector who had found "a device of ploughing the ground with hogs, to save the charges of ploughs, cattle and labour". Swift describes the technique with gravity, and then says : "It is true, upon experiment they found the charge and trouble very great, and they had little or no crop".

The school of political projectors. Lagado had a school of political projectors, one of whom proposed that members of parliament should deliver their speeches and then vote directly contrary. In his account of the Academy in Lagado, Swift exposes the nonsensical view of perfectibility held by the progressives. Then there was a short cut to the attainment of proficiency in art and sciences. By this contrivance, "the most ignorant person at a reasonable charge, and with a little bodily labour, may write books in philosophy, poetry, politics, law, mathematics and theology, without the least assistance from genius or study". The projectors were also bent on a "universal language to be understood in all civilized nations".

Nor did Swift subscribe to the worship of science, and the veneration accorded in his time to Newton :

> "New systems of nature were but new fashions which would vary in every age ; even those who pretend to demons-

> trate then from mathematical principles would flourish but a short period of time, and be out of vogue when that was determined."

However, Swift's deepest concerns were political and social. He ends with a scathing account of the nobility and family pride :

> "I confess it was not without some pleasure that I found myself able to trace the particular features by which certain families are distinguished, up to their originals. I could plainly discover from whence one family derives a long chin, why a second hath abounded with knaves for two generations, and fools for two more ; why a third happened to be crack-brained, and a fourth to be sharpers. . . .Neither could I wonder at all this, when I saw such an interruption of lineages by pages, lackeys, valets, coachmen, gamesters, fiddlers, players, captains, and pick-pockets." (Pages 243-44)

The Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. Gulliver's last voyage takes him to the country of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. The Houyhnhnms are horses, while the Yahoos are the human beings subject to those horses. The Yahoos are the beasts of burden. (The word "Yahoo" is another contribution by Swift to the English language.) We should here note that Swift's disgust is directed towards Mass-Man, because the Yahoos are hardly individualized, and this is in itself a sufficient reflection on the mass of men. The first distinction made is that the horses have no word for lying : they can only call it "the thing that is not". (Lying is a human tendency. Swift was disgusted by it. Not only do ordinary people tell lies, but they can hardly ever describe an event correctly. In statement, they do not care whether what they say is true or not ; and as for thinking, in the exact sense of the word, they are mostly incapable of it.)

Gulliver's (or Swift's) analysis of the causes of war. Gulliver's equine master wants the fact of human war, and the causes for the killings, to be explained to him, because it is not understood in the world of horses. Gulliver-Swift explains that in the long European war that had gone on through William III's and Queen Anne's time, almost without a break from 1689 to 1713, "about a million of Yahoos might have been killed in the whole progress of it, and perhaps a hundred or more cities taken, and thrice as many ships burnt or sunk". Swift's analysis of the causes of war is noteworthy. Sometimes the cause is the ambition of princes who never think they have land or people enough to govern. There are, too, religious or ideological wars :

> "Difference of opinion hath cost many millions of lives : for instance, whether flesh be bread, or bread be flesh ; whether the juice of a certain berry be blood or wine. . . .Sometimes the quarrel between two princes or powers is to decide which of them shall dispossess a third of his dominions. . . .Sometimes

a war is entered upon because the enemy is too strong, and sometimes because he is too weak. Sometimes our neighbours want the things which we have, or have the things which we want." (Page 292)

The portrayal of the Yahoos. Gulliver's equine master observed that "the Yahoos were known to hate one another more than they did any different species of animals". But, though the Yahoos could hurt each other with tooth and nail, they did not have the advantages of civilized men : "They seldom were able to kill one another for want of such convenient instruments of death as we* had invented." Swift also makes Gulliver point out that, for want of a foreign war to engage their attention, the Yahoos engage in a civil war among themselves. Thus the Yahoos are recognizably men all right. And such is the case in other respects also. Swift disliked extravagance, all forms of waste, and vulgar ostentation. He makes the following radical observations on the subject :

> "The rich men enjoyed the fruit of poor men's labour, and the latter were a thousand to one in proportion to the former. The bulk of our people were forced to live miserably, by labouring every day for small wages to make a few live plentifully." (Page 298)

There is a further stricture on the absurdity of magnifying human wants. The Yahoos are as idle and lazy as they are mischievous and vicious. Work is good for them, and so they do their utmost to avoid work. Their sexual appetites are similarly inordinate and uncontrolled. Swift here finds an opportunity to express his disgust for female sexuality. One day, when Gulliver takes off all his clothes to take a bath in the river, a female Yahoo, inflamed with desire, pursues him into the water. Gulliver had already noticed that, on such occasions, a female Yahoo had a most offensive smell ; and when any of the males advanced, she would slowly retire, looking often back and, with a pretence of fear, run off into some convenient place where she knew the male would follow her. Now, on this occasion, Gulliver finds himself embraced in a most fulsome manner, and has to be rescued from his humiliating plight. Swift felt a disgust for normal copulation also. That explains Gullivers horror at the "facts of life" on his return home, when he begins to consider that, by copulating with one of the Yahoo species, he had become a parent of more Yahoos. The thought fills Gulliver with "the utmost shame, confusion, and horror".

Control of population by the Houyhnhnms. In the country of the horses (or the Houyhnhnms), numbers are regulated : "Caution is necessary to prevent the country from being overburdened with

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**i.e.*, we, the civilized human beings.

numbers". The Houyhnhnms realized that reproduction is a matter for the exercise of rational control because otherwise there would soon be over-population.

Governed by reason. "Controversies, wranglings, disputes, and positiveness in false or dubious propositions" are unknown in the country of the Houyhnhnms. Similarly, systems of philosophy. all differing among themselves, are of no account. In a sentence which gives the whole clue to Swift we read :

> "Neither is reason a point problematical as with us, where men can agree plausibly on both sides of the question, but strikes you with immediate conviction, as it must needs do where it is not mingled, obscured, or discoloured by passion and interest." (Page 315)

12

"Gulliver's Travels" : Meaning and Significance

The secret of its appeal for children. *Gulliver's Travels* is Swift's most comprehensive and brilliantly worked out satire on man and civilization. At the same time this book has become a children's classic. It is not hard to understand why the first two Parts of this book, describing the hero's adventures first among tiny little people and then among enormous giants, should attract children for whom dolls and small-scale models of things always have a special attraction. Among the Lilliputians, Gulliver is among dolls, and among the Brobdingnagians he is himself a doll.

Satire on mankind in general and on particular abuses of the time. Swift's object in Part I is to deflate human pride by showing all the pomp and circumstance of human pretension, all the stylization* of cruelty, the vanities, rituals, political catchwords, meaningless controversies, that characterize man in society, existing in a community of minute creatures and so appearing as wholly contemptible. Conversely, when Swift places his hero among giants and makes him, now himself a tiny creature, boast about the way his civilization works to contemptuously amused grown-ups, they can only react to his absurd boastings with the crushing comment that Gulliver's people must be "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth". But Swift's attack is not simply on mankind in general. Nor does he make his points only by reducing the scale of the world we know and so making man ridiculously petty. The enormous size of the Brobdingnagians, who are observed with minute closeness by Gulliver as he is handled by them, enables Swift to vent his disgust with the flesh, with man as a physical animal who sweats and excretes—a disgust which grew on Swift until it became thoroughly obsessive. The Brobdingnagians are sometimes shown as living in a state of simple virtue in sharp contrast to the corruptions of European civilization ; at other times their grossness simply emphasizes the horribleness of the human animal. Again, Swift is as much concerned to expose particular abuses of his own time as to attack

* Stylization : conformity with convention ; acting in accordance with established conventions.

mankind, and though most of the detailed political satire is lost on the ordinary reader today, there is, especially in Part I, a complex political allegory at work, based on Swift's own experience of politics in Queen Anne's reign. But even without a knowledge of these experiences, the full power of the work can be felt.

Lilliput depicted sometimes as utopia* and sometimes as 18th-century England. In Part I there is a deliberate inconsistency in the way in which the satire operates. Sometimes the Lilliputians ways are described in such a way as to make the reader realize how stupid and vicious the European ways are. "The nurseries for males of noble or eminent birth are provided with grave and learned professors and their several deputies. The clothes and food of the children are plain and simple. They are bred up in the principles of honour, justice, courage, modesty, clemency, religion, and love of their country; they are always employed in some business, except in the times of eating and sleeping, which are very short, and two hours for diversions, consisting of bodily exercises. They are dressed by men till four years of age, and then are obliged to dress themselves, although their quality be ever so great." Lilliput is sometimes utopia and sometimes eighteenth-century England made utterly contemptible by the small size of the people who exhibit the same vices and follies as the English. The account of Lilliputian politics, with the quarrel between the High-Heels and the Low-Heels and between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians is clearly a parody of English politics. On the other hand, the chapter on Lilliputian laws and education is almost wholly utopian. "In choosing persons for all employments, they have more regard to good morals than to great abilities. They thought the want of moral virtues was so far from being supplied by superior endowments of the mind, that employments could never be put into such dangerous hands as those of persons so qualified." The irony lies not so much in that here is a utopian system which exposes that of England, but rather that here, put into actual practice, is what the English people profess to believe in but nobody would ever dream of acting on.

Gulliver the object of a farmer's contempt in Brobdingnag. In Brobdingnag everything is of enormous size. The first man whom Gulliver sees "appeared as tall as an ordinary spire steeple, and took about ten yards at every stride". Gulliver realizes that he appears as ridiculous to these people as the Lilliputians had seemed to him. He is discovered by a farmer who "considered a while with the caution of one who endeavours to lay hold on a small dangerous animal in such a manner that it shall not be able either to scratch or bite him, as I myself have sometimes done with a weasel in England. I apprehended every moment that he would dash me against the ground, as we usually do any little hateful animal which

*Utopia an ideal country; a country representing perfection of all excellences.

we have a mind to destroy." In a few words Swift has rendered man as an animal contemptible and cruel.

A satirical exposure of human pride and pretension (in Part II). Gulliver becomes the domestic pet of the farmer's nine-year-old daughter, and his experiences are detailed in the same circumstantial way as the Lilliputian adventures, with a careful account of the scale of everything and the means adopted to enable Gulliver to manage in this enormous world. Gulliver is treated as partly a pet, partly a freek of nature to be exhibited for profit, partly a baby, and partly a doll. In each of these aspects his experiences enable the author to indulge in a satirical exposure of human pride and pretension. Gulliver is then summoned to the royal court where the Queen buys him. He pleads his cause before her (having learned the language from the farmer's daughter), and the Queen is "surprised at so much wit and good sense in so diminutive an animal". The King at first conceives him to be a clock-work toy, but on hearing him speak admits that he is a rational creature—an ironic conclusion in the light of the rest of the book. Gulliver becomes a poet of the royal family, and has his own miniature furniture and utensils in a portable wooden box that serves as a bed-chamber for him. He tells the King about the English civilization. After he has described his country, its political parties, its religious conflicts, its wars, its trade, etc., the King lifts Gulliver with his right hand and, stroking him gently with the other, after a hearty fit of laughter, asks him whether he is a Whig or a Tory.

The views of the King of Brobdingnag. Swift's attack on human pride is relentless. The King observes "how contemptible a thing was huaman grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as I". And thus the King continues "while my colour came and went several times, with indignation to hear our noble country, the mistress of arts and arms, the scourge of France, the arbitress of Europe, the seat of virtue, piety, honour, and truth, the pride and envy of the world, so contemptuously treated". Gulliver's education has barely begun. It proceeds rapidly in Chapter 7 where he boasts of his country and its customs only to arouse in the King extreme contempt. "Nothing but an extreme love of truth", this chapter begins, "could have hindered me from concealing this part of my story". It tells of the ultimate humiliation not only of himself but of the civilizatiion he represents. Here is corrupt man facing humane reasonableness: "I remember very well, in a discourse one day with the King, when I happened to say there were several thousand books among us written upon the art of government, it gave him (directly contrary to my intention) a very mean opinion of our understanding. He professed both to abominate and despise all mystery, refinement, and intrigue either in a prince or a minister. He could not tell what I meant by secrets of state, where an enemy or some rival nation were not in the case. He confined the knowledge of governing within very narrow bounds; to common sense and reason, to justice and lenity, to the speedy determina-

tion of civil and criminal causes ; with some other obvious topics, which are not worth considering. And he gave it for his opinion, that whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before, would deserve better of mankind, and do more essential service to his country, than the whole race of politicians put together." The ideal nature of the Brobdingnagians becomes ever clearer in this section. Even their prose style is "clear, masculine, and smooth, but not florid". Gulliver discovers a book treating of the weakness of human kind, which was "in little esteem except among the women and the vulgar". And reading here further matter to diminish human pride, he is led for the first time to "believe, upon a strict inquiry, those quarrels might be shown as ill-grounded among us, as they are among that people."

Swift's recognition of the kindness and sympathy of the two ships' captains. When Gulliver is carried off by an eagle and dropped into the sea, whence he is rescued by an English ship, the Brobdingnagian adventure comes to an end. But this adventure leaves more enduring marks on Gulliver than the Lilliputian had done. The kindness of the ship's captain to Gulliver passes without comment, although it seems to contradict the indictment against mankind which runs through the book. (The same can be said about the even greater kindness of the captain of the Portuguese ship that rescues him in Part IV.) It takes Gulliver a long time to get accustomed to the smallness of "the houses, the trees, the cattle, and the people" once he is back in England. That as far as the people are concerned it is a moral smallness, he is not fully aware until after his last voyage. And yet the two ships' captains are models of kindness and sympathy : it is almost as if Swift were illustrating his remark to Alexander Pope that he hated man but loved individuals.

The character of the people of Laputa. Part III, the voyage to Laputa, is less interesting both because of its lack of unity and because the objects of the satire here are more relevant to Swift's own time. Swift here attacks every kind of unpractical scholarship, every vain philosophy, and the absurd and pretentious schemes of economists and promoters. It is here that we see most clearly how Swift's exaltation of reason leads to anti-intellectualism. Speculative thought is depicted here as ridiculous. The Laputan people have servants called "flappers" whose duty it is to draw their attention to what needs to be seen or heard ; these people are normally indifferent to what goes on around them till they are roused by some external action upon their organs of speech and hearing. They neglect practical matters in order to indulge in theory. Their houses are very ill-built, ; in the common actions and behaviour of life they are most clumsy, awkward, and unhandy people ; and they are slow and perplexed in their conceptions about all subjects except mathematics and music. They are complete strangers to imagination, fancy, and invention, and their intellectual

interests are confined to the two sciences already mentioned, namely mathematics and music.

A satire on inventors and promoters of new schemes. From Laputa, Gulliver goes to Balnibarbi and its capital Lagado. In the description of the Academy of Projectors in Lagado, Swift satirizes inventors and promoters of schemes for improving everything : "In these colleges the professors contrive new rules and methods of agriculture and building, and new instruments and tools for all trades and manufactures whereby, as they undertake, one man shall do the work of ten ; a palace may be built in a week, of materials so durable as to last for ever without repairing." Swift has a great deal of fun with his description of the professors of the Academy and their pursuits : "A new method of teaching was for a proposition and demonstration to be fairly written on a thin wafer, with ink composed of a cephalic tincture. This the student was to swallow upon a fasting stomach, and for three days eat nothing but bread and water. As the water digested, the tincture mounted to his brain, bearing the proposition along with it." The satire here is more comic than bitter, except in the passage explaining their method of proving the guilt of persons suspected of plotting against the State. The anagrammatic method of exposing a plot is thus illustrated : "So for example if I should say in a letter to a friend, 'Our brother Tom has just got the piles', a skilful decipherer would discover that the same letters which compose that sentence may be analyzed into the following words : 'Resist, a plot is brought home ; the tour (tower)'." The whole thing is preposterous.

The most shattering satire in Part IV. Nevertheless, the satire in Part III is largely confused or trivial. It is in Part IV that Swift's satire becomes most shattering, though at the same time it tends to destroy itself. The Houyhnhnms are a race of noble horses who live according to the laws of "reason and nature". Serving them and despised by them are the beastly Yahoos, a degenerate species of man. Gulliver himself recognizes how detestable the Yahoos are before he realizes, to his horror and astonishment, that those abominable animals have human figures in all respects. Gulliver this time makes no attempt to assert the superiority or even the decency of the human race. He is content to try to persuade the Houyhnhnms of the relationship between human beings and horses in his own country. In giving an account of the state of England, Gulliver speaks directly with Swift's own voice : "Now your Honour is to know that these judges are persons appointed to decide all controversies of property, as well as for the trial of criminals, and picked out from the most dexterous lawyers, who are grown old or lazy and, having been biased all their lives against truth and equity, lie under such a fatal necessity of favouring fraud, perjury, and oppression, that I have known several of them to have refused a large bribe from the side where justice lay, rather than injure the faculty by doing anything unbecoming their nature or their office." As Gulliver proceeds with his account of England, he speaks more and

more from the point of view of the Houyhnhnms who regard British institutions as the plain results of gross defects in reason and therefore in virtue. He apologizes to the reader for "giving so free a representation of my own species", but explains that "the many virtues of those excellent quadrupeds, placed in opposite view to human corruptions, had so for opened my eyes and enlarged my understanding that I began to view the actions and passions of men in a very different light, and to think the honour of my own kind not worth managing." Disgust for the human species increases steadily as the narrative proceeds, and Gulliver learns to live as a humble admirer and servant of the Houyhnhnms.

A dreary utopia in Part IV. As we read the account of the life of the Houyhnhnms we feel that this life of reason as led by them is curiously dead. We could even say that the reason which governs the Houyhnhnms is really a desire for death. These people are exempt from love, friendship, curiosity, fear, sorrow, anger, and hatred. (The last-mentioned two feelings—anger and hatred—they experience only towards the Yahoos in their country.) They show no fondness for their young ones. Their reason rules out any demonstration of love except an abstract and universal benevolence. They take no pleasure in sex, producing two children out of rational duty and thereafter abstaining. Their poetry is wholly didactic, usually containing "some exalted notions of friendship and benevolence, or the praises of those who were victors in races, and other bodily exercises". The Houyhnhnms continue for generation after generation to live prudently, maintaining their population at exactly the same level, avoiding all passion, suffering from no diseases, meeting death indifferently, and training up their young ones in the same principles. If their country is intended as a utopia, it is a dreary utopia indeed.

Swift's violent rejection of mankind at the end. Swifts ends his book by describing Gulliver's difficulty in reconciling himself to live among the Yahoos in England after his experience with the noble Houyhnhnm race ; and there is finally an attack on human pride when Gulliver says : "My reconcilement to the Yahoo-kind in general might not be so difficult, if they would be content with those vices and follies only which nature hath entitled them to. I am not in the least provoked at the sight of a lawyer, a pickpocket, a colonel, a fool, a lord, a gamester, a politician, a whore-master, a physician, an evidence, a suborner, an attorney, a traitor, or the like ; but when I behold a lump of deformity, and diseases both in body and mind, smitten with *pride*, it immediately breaks all the measures of my patience." The catalogue of lawyers, pickpockets, fools, lords, politicians, etc. is a savage rejection of all human institutions. The very length of this catalogue and the extremes it contains indicate the violence with which Swift rejects all human attempts to make any distinction between kinds of behaviour and of function. All catagories of people are covered by a single contemptible image—the Yahoo, who is proud of his Yahooness.

Thus Swift adopts a nihilistic position, forgetting that all men are not Yahoos, and forgetting also the kindness of the Portuguese captain. Also, it appears that Swift is himself speaking here through Gulliver.

[**Important Note**. It should be noted that all critics do not share this opinion. According to some, it is not Swift himself who is speaking through Gulliver at this particular point in the book. Gulliver's thorough-going misanthropy and cynicism are not to be attributed to Swift himself. Swift was a cynic and a misanthrope no doubt, but not of this extreme kind. Indeed, from this point of view, we can even say that at this point in the book Swift is making fun of Gulliver for having become such a thorough hater of mankind.]

13

The Intellectual and Moral Content in "Gulliver's Travels"

A solid core of intellectual meaning in this book. Literature in the eighteenth century was, of course, regarded as a source of pleasure, but it also, and very definitely, had the function of instructing. Literature was in those days expected to convey ideas and to offer both moral and intellectual commentary. *Gulliver Travels*, certainly a work of art, contains in a precise sense the kind of commentary which people in the eighteenth century expected. The book has a solid core of intellectual meaning, and it contains certain specific theories and principles about man and society.

The law of degeneration operative in human society. For one thing, *Gulliver's Travels* tells us that society lives in constant danger of corruption. The time-prospects which are given in the course of the book are all historical, extending from the present backwards into the past and revealing the law of degeneration to which men and human circumstances are for ever subject. The original institutions of Lilliput were admirable but afterwards the people fell into "the most scandalous corruptions" because of the "degenerate nature of man". Likewise the King of Brobdingnag, on being informed by Gulliver of European manners and customs. perceives in them "some lines of an institution which in its original might have been tolerable". Again, the vision of the dead in Chapters 7 and 8 in Part III affords several contrasts between the past and the present which illustrate the degenerative trend. These are the contrasts between the Roman senate and a modern parliament, and between English yeomen of the old stamp and their grandchildren. In Part IV, the Houyhnhnms have a traditional belief that the Yahoos are not native to their country but descendants of two brutes once seen together upon a mountain. Gulliver's equine master advances the theory that those two progenitors, driven thither over the sea and coming to land, were forsaken by their companions, retired to the mountains, and "degenerating by degrees became in process of time, much more savage than those of their own species in the country from whence these two originals came".

Pessimism, not of despair but of moral realism. This theory of history and of human behaviour can perhaps be called pessimistic, but the degree and quality of the pessimism involved have been badly misjudged. There was in Swift's time no widely accepted view of progress, no vision of social perfection awaiting mankind in the future. The Christian view of fallen man still conditioned most minds, and found no essential contradiction in the theory of politics and history which Swift had taken over from his classical and modern sources. Morally, man was expected to face the obligation of asserting reason over brute instinct. Socially and politically, man was expected to learn from history the means of prolonging the life of a civilized state which, though limited by laws of nature, might be preserved into old age by prudence. The pessimism inherent in such doctrines was not that of despair, but of a moral realism urging resolution and a mild hope.

Swift as a social theorist. So far as social theory was concerned, *Gulliver's Travels* might be said to rest on doctrines which still controlled the thought of most traditionalists, including a large part of the established clergy. Social stratification presented itself as inevitable and proper. The principle of degree, according to which everyone had his appointed place and was to acknowledge the obligations attaching to that place, corresponded to the links in the chain* of being, the gradations in the created universe. It was an older concept of the organised community. It was not democratic but it could not be regarded as anti-democratic either. As a social theorist the worst that Swift can be called is "clerical". The Lilliputian and Brobdingnagian societies both reveal established and recognized social scales. Among the Houyhnhnms there is an inferior class "bred up to be servants". And in the utopia sketched in the first voyage the education a person receives is suitable to his position in society : there are nurseries for children "of noble and eminent birth, nurseries for children of ordinary gentlemen, merchants, traders, and handicrafts" ; boys designed for trades leave school at the age of seven to be apprenticed ; the children of cottagers and labourers are kept at home, their business being only to till and cultivate the earth and their education consequently "of little consequence to the public". But there is equality for women. In the female nurseries Gulliver is unable to perceive any substantial difference in the education given to young girls, and we may remember that the Houyhnhnms find the idea of one kind of education for men and another for women a monstrous one.

Swift's championship of freedom. Swift firmly believed that there was conflict in human society, and that this conflict was in the nature of things and according to certain discoverable laws. It was, however, a political rather than an economic-social set of equations which he had worked out in order to explain history and

* *i.e.*, the principle of degree ; the gradations in the universe.

give us a certain measure of control over events. His theory of the three estates and of the balance of power, "to be carefully held by every State within itself", served both as analysis of the realities disclosed in history and as his central doctrine of rational or constitutional freedom, for as he had written years before in one of his pamphlets : "In all free States the evil to be avoided is tyranny or unlimited power solely in the hands of the one, or the few, or the many." His championship of the cause of Irish independence had been a battle on behalf of such rational liberty. The emphasis placed by both the Lilliputians and the King of Brobdingnag on common sense as against expertise in government is an essential part of this theory of freedom, and the suspicion of standing armies in time of peace expressed by the King follows directly from it. The political intrigues into which the Lilliputians have fallen in their degenerate condition and, in contrast, the avoidance of all such absurdities in partyless Brobdingnag point, perhaps, to that ideal of statesmanship above party which he had often expressed in the days of the Oxford Ministry.* More direct and candid as an expression of his passionate belief in liberty is the passage in Part III in which Caesar and Brutus are summoned from the dead :

> "I was struck with a profound veneration at the sight of Brutus ; and could easily discover the most consummate virtue, the greatest intrepidity, and firmness of mind, the truest love of his country, and general benevolence for mankind in every lineament of his countenance. I observed with much pleasure that these two persons were in good intelligence with each other ; and Caesar freely confessed to me that the greatest actions of his own life were not equal by many degrees to the glory of taking it away."

And as other ghosts are summoned, Gulliver feasts his eyes "with beholding the destroyers of tyrants and usurpers and the restorers of liberty to oppressed and injured nations".

No naturalistic theory advanced by Swift. The absence in *Gulliver's Travels* of certain themes long associated with imaginary voyages is in itself almost a positive. Throughout the seventeenth century the medium of the imaginary voyage had been employed by French writers to convey their naturalistic theories and as a means of subjecting established civilization and the culture of Europe to rationalistic criticism. The traveller habitually discovered some happy society where men lived the simple, uncorrupted life, instructed entirely by natural instinct and the innate light of reason ; and from the vantage point of such a primitivistic utopia European man was seen, in all his repulsiveness, as the victim of civilization and traditionalism. Gulliver's experiences are not of this kind, because the people among whom he finds himself in the course of his voyages are in no sense children of Nature. All these people are living in

* *i. e.* during the time when the Earl of Oxford headed the Ministry.

highly organized societies and are governed by institutions which Gulliver takes so much pains to describe. If in the end he develops an overwhelming aversion to everything at home, it is not because Europe suffers the evil of civilization but because it is losing its civilization and falling into a state of degenerate corruption. There is perhaps no other imaginary voyage as free as is Gulliver's of anything resembling anti-traditionalism. Gulliver's voyages contain no criticism of religion, no anti-clericalism, and very little of even the minor details of cultural primitivism.

Some general themes of moral satire in the book. In addition to the issues which have been mentioned and which form the framework of ideas on which *Gulliver's Travels* rests, we have of course the more general themes of moral satire : man's pettiness and greed, his pride, the infinite perversion of reason, the absurdities and evils of the various professions. There is an amusing summary of these themes in the *Letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin Richard Sympson*. In this letter Gulliver deplores the fact that, although the account of his travels was published six months ago, no change at all has taken place in the behaviour, conduct, and mentality of various kinds of persons in society. Gulliver points out that judges, pleaders, noblemen, physicians, the female Yahoos, royal courts and assemblies of ministers, wit and merit and learning, and all other categories of people have continued to suffer from all those vices from which they suffered prior to the publication of the account of his travels.

14

Comic Satire and Corrosive Satire in "Gulliver's Travels"

Comic satire and corrosive satire distinguished. Comedy and satire are of ancient origin. The most outstanding writers of comedy and satire in ancient times were the Romans, Horace and Juvenal. These two writers can be distinguished from each other in their handling of satire. In fact, they represent two different modes of satire. Horace wrote genial, laughing, urbane satire, while Juvenal excelled in writing severe, lashing satire. The first kind of satire works chiefly in terms of laughter, and may be called comic satire. The second mode emphasizes a severely satirical attack in which laughter is at a minimum, or perhaps even absent. This may be called caustic or corrosive satire. Swift, like Juvenal, holds a commanding position as a writer of corrosive satire. It may also be noted here that most critics have a preference for comic satire and are repelled by corrosive satire. Comic satire is generally regarded as a richer and more complete treatment of humanity than purely corrosive satire.

Two pasages of comic satire in Part I of the book. Although Swift is generally regarded as a master of corrosive satire, comic satire is not lacking in *Gulliver's Travels*. The account of Gulliver's first voyage, the voyage to Lilliput, offers several examples of comic satire. There is one outstanding passage of comic satire in this account, and it is the passage dealing with the high-heels and low-heels, and the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians in Chapter 4. Similarly there is a comic passage at the end of Chapter 6 in which Gulliver defends the reputation of the Lilliputian lady whose uame had been scandalously linked with his own.

Corrosive satire in Part I. In Chapter 7 of this account occurs the severest satire of the first voyage. Gulliver, who has deserved the highest gratitude from the Lilliputians, is impeached for certain capital offences—chiefly, for making water within the precincts of the royal palace in order to extinguish a fire, and for traitorously refusing to seize all the ships of Blefuscu and put to death all the Big-Endian exiles. Although this episode is introduced with a touch of comic absurdity in the articles of impeachment and in their pompous

phrasing, the court's debate on how to dispose of Gulliver is savage and ironic, and belongs to the category of corrosive satire. It is suggested that Gulliver be put to a painful and degrading death, his house be set on fire, and thousands of poisoned arrows be shot into his face and hands. His servants are to pour poisonous juices on his shirt, and to make him tear his own flesh so as to die in the "utmost torture". At this point Reldresal proves himself to be Gulliver's true friend by suggesting that blindness would be a punishment enough; but Gulliver's enemies argue against this proposal. The King, gracious and lenient, opposes the death sentence, but hints that punishments in addition to blindness may be inflicted on Gulliver. Finally, again through the goodwill of Reldresal, it is decided to blind Gulliver and to starve him to death.

Part I, on the whole a merry and amusing satire. In this episode which is the longest satirical passage in Part I of the book and the climax of the first voyage, the satirical attack is very bitter. As Swift exposes the hypocrisy, ingratitude, and cruelty of the Lilliputian court, he is no longer mirthful, and becomes as severe as afterwards in Part IV. Yet, on the whole, Part I is the merriest and most amusing in the whole book. The above-mentioned one passage of essentially corrosive satire is largely outweighed by incidental comedy, by the famous passage of comic satire (already referred to), and by the wealth of sheer narrative detail. By the end of Chapter 7 the corrosive attack has ceased : Gulliver is in Blefuscu, lying on the ground to kiss the hands of the Emperor and the Empress. In the final chapter of this part Gulliver returns to England and is re-united with his family. We here find him planning to breed Lilliputian sheep in the absurd hope of improving the English woollen manufacture.

The basic comic absurdity in Part I. Furthermore, there is in Part I the basic comic absurdity which pervades the entire first voyage, namely Gulliver's attitude in reporting his experiences. Constantly before our eyes we have the incredible double scale of size—human and Lilliputian—reported without comment by Gulliver who accepts the Lilliputian scale as easily as the human. It is the comic incongruity of inadequate reporting, felt as inadequate when we visualize the scenes and episodes described by Gulliver. The two scales of size are constantly blended and there is such a great use of specific visual detail that no reader has any difficulty in seeing the picture. Thus the scandal about Gulliver and the Lilliputian lady is immediately comic to the reader. But as Gulliver goes through his elaborate defence of her and his own reputation, the comedy is greatly heightened by the reader's realization of Gulliver's inadequate sense of the situation. In his long defence Gulliver never mentions the one particular that makes the scandal perfectly absurd, and that is the difference between the size of Gulliver and the size of the Lilliputian lady.

Increased proportion of comic episodes in Part II. The account of the second voyage, the voyage to Brobdingnag, like the first,

has much interesting descriptive and narrative material that is essentially neither comic nor satirical. But there is now an increased proportion of comic episodes, and the corrosive satire carries far more weight than in Part I. The increased comic effect is achieved mainly at the expense of Gulliver, because in the second voyage he is reduced in status and becomes obviously an object of comic satire. He retains a pride and self-esteem which would be perfectly normal for him among his physical equals, but which are ridiculous under the circumstances, and which result in his being made the comic butt in several episodes. The increased corrosive effect is achieved chiefly by the long chapter in which Gulliver and the King discuss mankind.

Corrosive satire in Part II. In this long chapter (6) Gulliver gives to the King a favourable account of the English system. The King perceives that all is not well with the civilization of Gulliver's country. Being a reasonable and thoughtful monarch, he asks Gulliver many questions. The answers to these questions reveal the defects in the civilization of Gulliver's country. In this passage there is hardly any emotional, ironic, or comic effect as the King conducts his grave and judicial enquiry. Finally, when the King has considered all the information supplied by Gulliver, he calmly delivers his well-known criticism of the human race. The King here describes the bulk of mankind as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth".

The climax of corrosive satire in Part II. The quality of this criticism by the King is corrosive, not comic. Yet it is only a preliminary to the satire that follows in Chapter 7. Gulliver's hope of impressing the King has produced a reverse effect, and Swift now proceeds to allow Gulliver to reveal himself as a typical member of the human race, and Swift at the same time drives the satirical attack still deeper. Gulliver expresses his great embarrassment at hearing his noble and most beloved country so unjustly described*. At this point, Swift calls into play the double voice of irony. The squirming Gulliver reveals that he has given to every point a more favourable turn by many degrees than the strictness of truth would allow; but nevertheless he suggests, in a superior tone, that "great allowances should be given to a King who lives so wholly secluded from the rest of the world" and hence must be suffering from "a certain narrowness of thinking, from which we and the politer countries of Europe are wholly exempted". Gulliver's comments here have further worsened his case for mankind, besides revealing the absurdity of his sense of superiority to the King. But Swift does not stop here because he still has to reach his satirical climax and to reduce Gulliver completely. Accordingly, Gulliver offers to the King the secret of gun-powder, giving the King an idea of its vast destructive power. The King is horrified. Regarding Gulliver as inhuman in advancing

*i.e., as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin".

such proposals, the King forbids him to mention the matter again. Gulliver again thinks the King's attitude to be a result of "narrow principles and short views".

Comic and ironic torches added to corrosive satire in Part II. This long, satirical account is a fairly elaborate affair. We have here, first, Gulliver's theme of the excellence of mankind. Next comes the calm but corrosive satire of the King's questions and his final dismissal of mankind—a note which sounds through the rest of the account. Swift then employs the weapon of irony. Gulliver's self-complacent assumption that he is doing a favour to the King co-exists in the reader's mind with the shocking demonstration of what man's inhumanity is capable of. Gulliver demolishes himself with the reader as well as the King ; and Swift achieves a bitter yet comic irony in Gulliver's unawareness and continued self-assurance. And underlying the whole satirical structure of this account is the sub-structure of physical absurdity. With all his fine words and feeling of superiority, Gulliver is so small that the King can just lift him with his hand and stroke him as if he were a pet. To corrosive satire Swift has added comic and ironic touches.

Abundant comic satire in Part III. In Part III comic satire preponderates. At least one critic thinks it to be the funniest part in the whole book, although some others regard it as the dullest. Actually, there is considerable laughing-matter in Part III. As early as in Chapter 2 we come across "flappers" or servants who carry in their hands a blown bladder fastened to the end of a short stick. The function of these "flappers" is to draw the attention of their masters to anything that might need their attention, because the minds of their masters are so occupied with intense speculations that they can neither speak nor listen to others without being roused by some external action. This is all very amusing. Then there are the different dishes at the dinner-table where the mutton, the beef, and the pudding have been given geometrical shapes or the shapes of musical instruments. Next, we are told that the people of this flying island are capable of catching the music of the spheres. Not only that. When these people want to praise the beauty of a woman or any other animal, they describe it by geometrical terms such as circles and parallelograms, or by musical terms. We are still more amused to learn that the people here are always in a state of disquietude and can never enjoy a minute's peace of mind. The women freely make love to strangers in the very presence of their husbands because the husbands, being mentally always occupied, can hardly pay any attention to them. We are given a very funny story at the end of Chapter 2 about the wife of a Prime Minister who having gone down to Lagado, wanted to stay on there with a deformed footman. Chapter 5 of Part III is perhaps even more amusing, with its descriptions of the various projects which occupy the attention of the experimentors

at the Academy in Lagado. We are greatly amused by the stupidity and folly of the projectors who are busy finding methods to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to convert human excrement into its original food, to build houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, to obtain silk from cobwebs, to produce books by the use of a machine and without having to use one's brain, and so on. This chapter has been regarded as a satire on the kind of work which the Royal Society in England was engaged upon in those days. Chapter 6 which describes political projects is also very funny. Chapter 7 too contains certain comic elements as, for instance, when Gulliver finds that ghosts and spirits are in attendance at the dinner-table. This chapter has been interpreted as a satire on the pointlessness of historical inquiry.

The element of corrosive satire in Part III. There is very little corrosive satire in this Part. We have some hint of corrosive satire in the chapter (9) in which we are told that a visitor wanting to meet the King had to creep on the floor and lick it when approaching the royal throne. When the King wanted to put any of his courtiers to death, he sprinkled a poisonous powder on the floor so that the courtier, while licking the floor, got poisoned and died soon afterwards. Swift is here attacking the arbitrariness of the monarchs of those days and their whimsical nature. But the satire becomes more scathing and pungent when we are given a description of the Struldbrugs. These persons, being immortal, present a most miserable and wretched sight on account of their old age and the infirmities which come with old age. These people have not only become peevish, morose, and vain, but also incapable of friendship and dead to all natural affection. Whenever they see a funeral, they lament and deplore the fact that, while others attain peace of mind by dying, they themselves are condemned to everlasting misery because they cannot die. Gulliver tells us that these immortals presented "the most mortifying sight" he had ever beheld. The women among them looked even more horrible than the men because, besides the usual deformities of extreme old age, they had acquired an additional ghastliness in proportion to their old age. All this is intended to be a satire on the human desire for immortality ; and a grim satire it is.

Corrosive satire on human motives in Part IV. The fourth voyage lacks the picturesque and interesting descriptive and narrative detail so abundantly present in the first two voyages. There is, for instance, no double physical scale, and there is little narrative action. Swift does, of course, embody the chief elements of his satirical analysis in the concrete symbols of the horse and the Yahoo, and he describes the Yohoo in full and unpleasant detail. Even so, the spirit and scheme of the fourth voyage possess far less narrative richness than we find in the case of the first two voyages, because Swift now shifts the emphasis of his attack. The satire of the first two voyages is concerned with the flaws and defects of human actions. But the account of the fourth voyage

cuts deeper. As actions are an index of human nature, the corrosive satire of the last voyage deals with the motives and causes of action, and with the inner make-up of man.

The reader too a target of satirical attack in Part IV. Another difference in the fourth voyage is also noteworthy. Here the reader himself becomes an object of the satirical attack. In the first two parts the reader may remain calm in the face of the satire, because the satire seems to be directed against monarchs and politicians and against small groups of people. Even Gulliver's offer of gun-powder to the King of Brobdingnag does not involve the reader much, because the reader too probably disapproves of war as much as Swift does. But in Part IV the reader cannot escape the attack, because Swift is attacking the Yahoo in each one of us.

Corrosive satire in Part IV deep and merciless. Furthermore it has now become Swift's purpose to drive home the satire insistently and relentlessly. Had he wished to achieve only the amusing and comic satire of the first two parts with occasional touches of the corrosive variety, he need not have written the last part. But Swift went on, and in the fourth voyage corrosive satire becomes deep and merciless. In this part of the book, Swift sharply divides human nature into two parts. He attributes reason and benevolence to the Houyhnhnms, while the Yahoos are depicted as mere brutes with selfish appetites. Furthermore, Swift gives to the good qualities the non-human form of the horse, and to the bad qualities the nearly human form of the Yahoos. The satire would have been much less effective if the Houyhnhnms had been described merely as a superior human race. The reader would in that case have naturally evaded the satirical attack by identifying himself with a Houyhnhnms.

The repellent physical details of the Yahoos. Again, for intensity of attack, Swift dwells with unpleasant particularity on Yahoo form and nature : the emphasis is necessarily on Yahoo form and nature. In this connection, it may be pointed out that the unpleasant physical characteristics of the Yahoos are in themselves hardly as repellent as the disgusting physical details which Gulliver has noted among the Brobdingnagians. The microscopic eye among the giants produces perhaps as repulsive a series of physical images as can be found in literature ; but, for all that, we are aware of a fantastic enlargement, and this makes for relative unreality. The Yahoos are not giants ; they resemble us all too closely in some ways, and their unpleasant physical traits are displayed to us without the variety of relief existing in Part II.

Little comedy in Part IV. Swift does not spare us anything in this last voyage. If he had made us chuckle and laugh at the Yahoos, and had amused us by depicting their activities, his corrosive satire would have been proportionately weakened. Similarly, if he had portrayed the Houyhnhnms so as to produce a

comic effect, his chief purpose would have been impaired. Another noteworthy point is that in the first nine chapters of Part IV Swift further simplifies and concentrates his attack by making almost no use of irony. The attack on the Yahoos (that is, human beings) is not only severe, but literal and direct.

Occasional fun at the expense of the Houyhnhnms. Some have found the misanthropy of this last voyage too excessive to be accepted. They find Swift's hatred to be all-consuming. According to them, the sanity of his rich and complex genius has been dissipated. But we should remember that Swift not only wrote the first nine chapters of Part IV but also the last three. To neglect these final chapters is like ignoring the final couplet in a sonnet by Shakespeare, or the last part of a tragi-comedy like *The Winter's Tale*, or the last three chapters of *Moby Dick*.* To say that the first nine chapters of the fourth voyage are almost continuous corrosive satire does not mean that narrative and comic touches are absolutely lacking in them. Swift cannot resist an occasional bit of fun at the expense of the Houyhnhnms. Thus Gulliver remembers once seeing some Houyhnhnms employed in domestic business, though he does not specify what business. The intellectual limitations and arrogance of the Houyhnhnms are amusingly illustrated in the passage in which the Houyhnhnm criticizes the human form. In every point wherein man and horse differ, the Houyhnhnms automatically and even absurdly assumes that the advantage lies obviously with the horse ; for example, that four legs are better than two or that the human anatomy is defective because Gulliver cannot eat without lifting one of his fore-feet to his mouth. While Swift, in pursuit of his purpose, is careful not to make the Houyhnhnms absurd, there are enough comic touches to show that Swift does not totally accept Gulliver's worshipful attitude towards them.

Swift's suggestions for certain ludicrous illustrations. Further evidence that Swift was well aware that the Houyhnhnms were after all, horses, and that they offered enough material for comedy, may be found in a letter he wrote to his publisher concerning the illustrations for a new edition of *Gulliver's Travels*. In this letter, Swift makes suggestions for certain ludicrous illustrations in connection with the first nine chapters of the fourth voyage. In other words, Swift recognized the comic effect of the rather simple horses visualized in their relationship of superiority to Gulliver and the Yahoos. However, the comic touches in the portrayal of the Houyhnhnms do not weaken the main attack which is directed against the Yahoos.

The most unrelieved satirical attack on the Yahoos. In the first nine chapters of the last voyage, the Yahoos (or the human beings) have been presented in all their horror. Swift has in these chapters

* the famous novel by the American author, Herman Melville.

achieved the most blasting and unrelieved satirical attack possible. Whatever can be said against the flaws and defects of human nature has been exhaustively said. Gulliver's revolt against mankind is so complete that Swift is able to give the knife a final twist : mankind is, if anything, worse than the Yahoos, since man is afflicted by pride, and makes use of what mental power he has to achieve perversions and corruptions undreamed of even by the Yahoos.

Gulliver's word not final. At this point of the satirical attack many readers have concluded that this was Swift's final word because it is Gulliver's final word. Swept away by the force of the corrosive attack on the Yahoos, they think that Gulliver is at last Swift. In the last three chapters, however, Swift shows that Gulliver's word cannot be final.

Gulliver's pessimism and misanthropy only one part of Swift. Swift, satirist is and realist, is well aware that there is more of the Yahoos in mankind than there is of benevolence and reason. And he develops his attack as forcefully as he can, by means of corrosive satire, in terms of pessimism and misanthropy. But this is only a part of Swift. He is also perfectly aware that the problem is not so simply solved as it is for the Houyhnhnms and for Gulliver. He knows that there is much to be hated in the animal called man, but he knows also that there are many lovable individuals among human beings. The horses have no room for anything between Houyhnhnm and Yahoo, and Gulliver takes over this too simple attitude. Just as Gulliver's physical sense of proportion was upset by his voyage to the country of the giants, so here his intellectual sense of proportion is overbalanced. The limited, simplified Houyhnhnm point of view is obviously better to him than the Yahoo state ; and he clings to it. Swift can keep clear the double physical scale of Gulliver and giant ; not so, Gulliver. Similarly, Swift can differentiate between Yahoo and Gulliver, but Gulliver himself is convinced that he is a Yahoo.

Comic touches in Chapter 10 at Gulliver's cost. Swift has fun with Gulliver in Chapter 10. Swift makes the Houyhnhnms, with more ruthlessness than benevolence, order Gulliver to leave their country. Gulliver faints on hearing the decision. He is allowed two months to build a boat, and eventually he has to leave. The scene of his parting is heart-breaking for Gulliver ; but for Swift and the reader it has its comic touches.

Swift's view in these last chapter not the same as Gulliver's. In the earlier voyages, Swift had spent only a few pages on Gulliver's return to the real world ; in the fourth and last voyage he gives two chapters to it. These two chapters are the climax of Swift's whole satire as well as the end of the fourth voyage. Gulliver, hating himself and all men as Yahoos, is reintroduced to the world of actual men and women. If now Swift's view were the same as Gulliver's, Swift should have gone on with his severe satire against mankind, and even deepened it with specific examples of Yahoo

nature. But Swift does nothing of the kind. Rather, he shows us very carefully and at some length the inadequacy of Gulliver's new attitude. Gulliver continues to tremble between fear and hatred when confronted by a human being, while at the same time it is made clear that the persons with whom he comes into contact are essentially honest, kind-hearted, and generous. But Gulliver now sees men only as Yahoos, with the result that he cannot accept goodness and generosity even when he actually witnesses these qualities in human beings.

Gulliver's dislike of the ship's Captain despite the latter's kind-heartedness. The Portuguese crew speak to Gulliver with great humanity when they find him, but he feels horrified. When he is taken to the Captain of the ship, Pedro de Mendez, he remains silent and sullen, and is ready to faint at the very smell of him and his men. He tells the Captain that he would suffer the greatest hardships rather than return to live among the Yahoos. The Captain offers Gulliver the best clothes he has. In Lisbon, the Captain still further helps Gulliver, taking him to his house and persuading him to accept a newly made suit of clothes. The Captain's whole deportment is so obliging that, added to a very good human understanding, it makes the Captain's company tolerable to Gulliver. However, Gulliver's hatred and contempt do not diminish.

Gulliver's misanthropy not justified. Swift introduces Pedro de Mendez as a kind and generous individual precisely as a foil to Gulliver's misanthropy. Swift wants to show that Gulliver has totally lost his judgment and mental balance, thereby becoming incapable of recognizing the excellent qualities of human beings wherever they exist. Chapter 11 is almost wholly a demonstration that Gulliver behaves in a most absurd manner by blindly refusing to give up his misanthropic beliefs. His conduct on his returning home is the ultimate result of this absurdity. His family receive him with joy, but the sight of them fills him with hatred, contempt, and disgust. When his wife kisses him, he falls into a swoon for almost an hour. In other words, his adopted attitude of mind now permits him to see only the Yahoo in man or woman. Even after five years he does not permit any member of his family to touch him. With his first saving, he buys two young horses with whom he converses for at least four hours every day.

Comic satire of the concluding chapters with Gulliver as Swift's target. Gulliver's attitude is not the solution. This is exactly what Swift wants us to understand. It is too unbalanced and unrealistic an attitude, and Swift presents its absurdity to us. Gulliver's attitude is in effect a complete quarrel with man and a final refusal to accept the nature of a man. To accuse Swift of having the same attitude is to ignore the evidence. Much in the nature of man was certainly hateful and detestable to Swift, and he often attacked it in

unambiguous terms. But, though Gulliver's soul is completely discontented at the end, Swift rises to a higher level. Swift shows himself to be much more than a corrosive satirist only. Swift shows his high sense of the comic. In the final satirical vision of the concluding chapters of the book, Gulliver's discontentment is enclosed in comic satire, with Gulliver himself as the target.

The inadequacy of the corrosive attitude emphasized by Swift. In Part IV, then, Swift gives a complete expression to his satirical vision, lashing his victims mercilessly. But he also realizes that the conclusions which have been drawn by Gulliver from this frightful vision are inadequate and invalid. The negative, corrosive attack by Swift on mankind is present up to the last page of the book. But what more Swift does in the last three chapters is unique in the history of satirical literature. Severe satire remains the main theme even in these chapters, but the new theme of Gulliver's absurdity now complicates the issue. Swift rises to a larger and more comprehensive view than Gulliver, and in this way he satirically comments on the inadequacy of the corrosive attitude. The evils in the world and in man are such that a simple and ethical temperament may be driven to despair and misanthropy. Yet such an attitude is shown by Swift to be inadequate and absurd.

Swift's transcending the misanthropic solution. Gulliver's attitude at the end is a kind of misanthropic solution of the problem of evil. Such an attitude is a tempting solution for a severe satirist ; but Swift found it too limited and too unrealistic. It is true that Swift offers no answer of his own, and no solution. But he does transcend the misanthropic solution. He could see that his own severest satire was the result of a partial and one-sided view, which was therefore properly a subject for mirth. This is the final comedy of Lemuel Gulliver, that Swift is able to make a subtle joke at the expense of Gulliver, or at the expense of a very important part of himself. We may leave Gulliver in the company of his two young horses, but Swift is not with him. Swift is above Gulliver, in the realm of comic satire ; he is still indignant at the Yahoo in man, but at the same time he is smiling at Gulliver's absurdity in being able to see only the Yahoo in man and no more than the Yahoo.

15

"*Gulliver's Travels*" *As a Satirical and Moral Tale*

The satirical methods of parody, raillery, and irony. *Gulliver's Travels* is a satire with which Swift wanted to vex the world. The book was addressed both to Swift's contemporaries and to posterity. In writing this book Swift once again employed his favourite device of parody. He wrote a book of travels in imitation of the most popular best-sellers of the day, like Dampier's *Voyages*. By employing the form of the travel-book, Swift was able to use the satirical methods which he had perfected in his earliest literary work—parody, raillery, and irony—and also to make use of all his experiences of the world gained during his active political career.

Satirical references to contemporary political events and scientific experiments. In the first and the third Parts of this book, Swift manages to include a good deal of satirical reference to the political events in which he had taken part, both in England and in Ireland. Both these Parts are in fact confused and inconsistent, because they are constantly twisted to suit his immediate satirical purpose, whether he is concerned with the political situation or with very specific parody and burlesque of the experiments of contemporary scientists or the schemes of other projectors.

A good deal of fun in Part I. There is a good deal of fun in Part I, which deals with Lilliput. Here, with Gulliver, we are able to assume a certain superior detachment and amusement at the ways of pigmies. Like him, we are protected from any serious danger at the hands of Lilliputians. We are, as it were, on good terms with them, and could not be unduly disturbed by anything which these little creatures might do. Even the diversions of the court of Lilliput are observed by us with good humour, and we could laugh at the antics of the rope-dancers, and the leaping and creeping of the ministers as the Emperor advances or depresses his stick. It is just a joke to watch them swearing an oath according to the strange method prescribed by their laws : "Hold the right foot in the left hand, place the middle finger of the right hand on the crown of the head, and the thumb on the tip of the right ear." Even the conflicts between the high heels and the low

heels, and between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians seem to be a matter of comedy. The ugly ambition of the Emperor to seize all the remaining ships of the enemy, after their navy has been captured and brought to him by Gulliver, in order to make himself a monarch of the whole world does not frighten us unduly, especially as his ambition is not approved by the wisest members of his ministry.

No suspicion of any evil. We are indeed made to share Gulliver's unwillingness to believe any evil of the princes and his unpreparedness for their ingratitude and dishonesty. It is only after he has been wrongly suspected of rebellion that he begins to have doubts and says : "This was the first time I began to conceive some imperfect idea of courts and ministers". We cannot really believe any danger from them as the royal family come to dine with Gulliver, or as the members of the court visit him. Even when the articles of impeachment are drawn up against him, and the fierce antagonism of his enemies is disclosed, with their demand that he should be horribly murdered, whereas the Emperor in his lenity and tenderness, is willing to condemn him to blindness, he is still able to make use of the most delicate form of irony :

> "Yet, as to myself, I must confess, having never been designed for a courtier, either by my birth or education, I was so ill a judge of things that I could not discover the lenity and favour of this sentence ; but conceived it (perhaps erroneous) rather to be rigorous than gentle. I sometimes thought of standing my trial ; for although I could not deny the facts alleged in the several articles, yet I hoped they would admit of some extenuations. But having in my life perused many state-trials, which I ever observed to terminate as the judges thought fit to direct, I durst not rely on so dangerous a decision, in so critical a juncture, and against such powerful enemies. Once I was strongly bent upon resistance : for while I had liberty, the whole strength of that Empire could hardly subdue me, and I might easily with stones pelt the metropolis to pieces ; but I soon rejected that project with horror by remembering the oath I had made to the Emperor, the favours I received from him, and the high title he conferred upon me. Neither had I so soon learned the gratitude of courtiers, to persuade myself that his Majesty's present severities acquitted me of all past applications." (Part I, Chapter 7)

Lilliput, a toy-shop invaded by a colossus. It is almost as though the diminitive height of the Lilliputians compels Gulliver to handle them and their affairs with a kind of tenderness lest they should break in pieces. The whole country remains inevitably in our imaginations as a kind of toy-shop, invaded by a clumsy colossus who finds it difficult to move about without overturning houses and trampling on the inhabitants. Only occasionally, when Gulliver makes comments on the laws and customs of the land, and on

their system of education, we sometimes forget the figure of Gulliver the colossus and the tiny figures he is discussing, and on such occasions we hear rather the familiar comments of Dean Swift on education and life. It is surprising how easily the imagination remains bound if we are constantly given some one concrete detail such as a goose of the size of a sparrow, or a forest tree the top of which Gulliver can touch with his hand. But in the same way a sentence or two can completely dispel the scene and banish us from this tiny commonwealth. "In relating these and the following laws, I would only be understood to mean the original institutions, and not the most scandalous corruptions into which these people are fallen by the degenerate nature of man." Phrases like "the degenerate nature of man", "the great laws of nature", "the miseries of human life" are somewhat too large for that tiny world and break down the willing suspension of our unbelief ; and then the author must make a renewed effort to restore it.

The passages of unrestrained invective. The real greatness of *Gulliver's Travels* is to be found when we recognize it as the final and the completest satire on human life by a Christian moralist. That is the reason why so many people have been disturbed by this work. It is written by one who did not like the ways of the world and who was willing to set down his testimony against it. There are two passages which appeared to the original publisher such unrestrained invective that he was unwilling to print them in their original form. The first is a comment on English political life :

> "The bulk of the people consisted wholly of discoverers, witnesses, informers, accusers, prosecutors, evidences, swearers, together with their several subservient and subaltern instruments, all under the colours, the conduct, and pay of ministers and their deputies." (Part III, Chapter 6)

The second is a comment on the legal profession with which Swift had some unfortunate personal experiences :

> I said there was a society of men among us, bred up from their youth in the art of proving by words multiplied for the purpose, that white is black and black is white, according as they are paid . . . . Now your Honour is to know that these judges are persons appointed to decide all controversies of property, as well as for the trial of criminals, and picked out from the most dexterous lawyers who are grown old or lazy, and having been biased all their lives against truth and equity, lie under such fatal necessity of favouring fraud, perjury, and oppression, that I have known some of them refuse a large bribe from the side where justice lay, rather than injury to the Faculty* by doing anything unbecoming the nature of their office . . . . In the trial of persons accused for

*i.e., their profession

> crimes against the State, the method is much more short and commendable. The judge first sends to sound the disposition of those in power; after which he can easily hang or save the criminal, strictly perserving all the forms of law. (Part IV, Chapter 5)

Some other Comments. But there are other comments which occur in Part II, when Gulliver is trying to explain the glories of western civilization to the simple-hearted king of Brobdingnag, that did not cause any anxiety to the publisher, though the author's intention could be regarded as dangerous. After Gulliver has boasted to the King of the past history of his own country and some of the more important developments of his society, the King sums up his impressions in the following manner:

> "I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." (Book II, Chapter 6)

Gulliver attributes the King's conclusion to the fact that the King has been living a life wholly secluded from the world, and has been unacquainted with the manners and customs of other nations. Gulliver gives us another example to show the effect of "narrow principles and short views", resulting from a "confined education". When Gulliver reveals to the King the secret of the manufacture of gun-powder, the King feels horrified, and says that he would rather lose half his Kingdom than learn such a secret in order to make use of the destructive power of the explosive. Gulliver interprets* this reaction of the King also as the result of the King's "narrow principles".

A parody of the Royal Society in Part III. Part of *Gulliver's Travels* is somewhat confused and lacking in unity. It seems that Swift had not thoroughly assimilated the material for this portion of the book through his own experience, so that he had sometimes to fall back almost on the methods of *A Tale of the Tub* in making fun of the extravagancies of the strange experiments of the scientists of the Royal Society. Swift was here closely parodying the actual accounts he had read about the kind of research that was being carried on by the Royal Society in those days. In using his favourite method of parody, Swift was appealing more directly to his contemporaries and especially to his London audience, but he doubtless knew that the absurdities he slightly exaggerated would serve as symbols, which everyone could recognize, of the spirit of research he was eager to expose. It is also to be kept in mind that the satire upon the projectors in Part III was not limited to scientists and virtuosos, and that Swift also wanted to warn his readers against the political projectors and speculators who had

*Of course, there is irony behind Gulliver's interpretation.

been responsible for such schemes as the South Sea Bubble and other commercial frauds of this kind.

No escape for Swift from the knavery and stupidity of this world. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* has shocked readers most of all, although it is a simple and traditional moral tale, vividly dramatized through animal symbolism. This Part is perhaps a little medieval in its extravagant and sometimes unpleasant burlesque of some of the qualities of man's brute nature, and in the complete separation of his rational qualities as they might possibly exist in some utopian world. But the real cause of our fear of Swift's satire here is that we are progressively led on with Gulliver from a comparatively happy condition in which we were in that blessed state of being well deceived until we have made the painful discovery of the knavery of human life and the stupidity and malice of mankind. However, many moralists, prophets, and satirists have made the same discovery and found the world to be a wilderness and life to be meaningless. But these people have turned to the past or future or to another world for consolation, while Swift finds no escape from that world and can take refuge nowhere. Swift at no point in his travels is able to overcome his dislike of human existence. His protest had already found expression in one of his previous writings in the following words :

> "Although reason were intended by Providence to govern our passions, yet it seems that, in two points of the greatest moment to the being and continuance of the world, God hath intended our passions to prevail over reason. The first is the propagation of our species, since no wise man ever married from the dictates of reason. The other is the love of life which, from the dictates of reason, every man would despise." (*Thoughts on Religion*)

This view colours that passage in Chapter 6 of Part I, which concerns the relations between parents and children and where Gulliver tells us that in Lilliput children are under no obligation to their fathers for begetting them or to their mothers for giving them birth.

Gulliver's dislike of his own children. More dramatically he plays with the same theme at the end of Part IV when, returning from his experience of a rational utopia under the influence of beings who represent the perfection of nature, Gulliver freely confesses that the sight of his wife and family filled him "only with hatred, disgust, and contempt ; and the more, by reflecting on the near alliance he had to them".

Violent satire on the human desire for immortality. But even this is not such a violent satire upon "love of life" as Swift reserved for the last episode of the third voyage, which may well have been in point of composition the last chapter he wrote. Swift

wrote Part IV mainly in 1723, and did not complete Part III until 1725. It is a chapter entirely complete in itself—a perfect little irony. Swift draws particular attention to it, and evidently considered it to be quite original. He says : "I thought this account of the Struldbrugs might be some entertainment to the reader, because it seems to be a little out of the common way ; at least I do not remember to have met the like in any book of travels that hath come to my hands." Gulliver is asked one day whether he had seen any of their immortals, and after hearing an account of them, he indulges in extravagant expressions of rapture at the thought of people so blessed. He is then asked by his hosts what he would do if he were an immortal. He becomes eloquent in describing the fruitful purposes to which he would put his immortality. He is then told what the Struldbrugs are really like ; and finally he has an opportunity to see a group of them, the youngest not above two hundred years old. "They were the most mortifying sight I ever beheld and my keen appetite for perpetuity of life was much abated." He would have been glad to send a couple of them home to his country to arm people against the fear of death, but that was forbidden by the laws of the kingdom. Nevertheless, he tells us that he was led to believe that if he were to write down a simple and wholly truthful account of his travels, it might possibly do his countrymen some good. He can claim to be above any possible censure, having avoided every fault, commonly found in books of travel :

> "I write for the noblest end, to inform and instruct mankind, over whom I may, without breach of modesty, pretend to some superiority, from the advantages I received by conversing so long among the most accomplished Houyhnhnms. I write without any view towards profit or praise." (Part IV, Chapter 12)

The utopian illusion. Is *Gulliver's Travels* then, after all, only another moral tale, another rationalist's utopian dream to turn men from the folly of their ways and bring about some improvement in human society ? Swift indeed allows his traveller, Gulliver, to enter the company of the eighteenth-century philosophers and to believe, for a while, that humanity could enter into a heavenly city of its own if only it could be released from the bonds of superstition and ignorance. But Swift allowed Gulliver to go thus far only to undeceive him entirely soon afterwards and to take from him his last illusion.

Swift, unreconciled to the sickness of mankind. The book has been provided with an epilogue, in the form of a letter from Captain Gulliver to his cousin, Richard Sympson, who had been responsible for getting the book printed. In this final statement, Swift is careful to separate himself from the other historians and philosophers, and even from the rest of the satirists by turning his satire full upon them and their vain hopes to do something to improve the human species. In this letter, Gulliver declares that, although seven months

have passed since his book of travels was published, it has brought about absolutely no improvement in the behaviour of his countrymen whom he regards as Yahoos. This letter seems to show that Swift, while he could not refrain from probing and analyzing the sickness of humanity, was convinced that the further he went the more he would find in human life to arouse his anger and his pity. It was his peculiar satisfaction as a moralist and a satirist to make us see the kind of world in which we live, to make us feel its brutality and its degradation, to disturb all our complacencies and to leave us unreconciled to the incalculable sum of human pain.

[**Note.** It is necessary to add here that the conclusion which has been reached above is different from that of the critic* who believes that Gulliver's final cynicism and misanthropy (which are incurable and permanent) should not be attributed to Swift himself. According to that critic, Swift does not identify himself with Gulliver in the closing chapters of the book. In the closing chapters, that critic tells us, Swift is satirizing Gulliver's incurable misanthropy. In other words, Gulliver himself becomes the target of Swift's satire in the closing chapters. In short, according to that critic's point of view, Swift is not such a complete cynic as Gulliver ultimately becomes. Even though Swift does not suggest any remedy for the evils of human nature, yet he cannot be regarded as a thoroughgoing cynic and misanthrope.]

* John F. Ross

16

The Nature of Politics in Different Lands

Fundamental questions about the nature of politics. Among other things, *Gulliver's Travels* considers fundamental questions about the nature of politics, like the ideal reconciliation of duty and interest among the Houyhnhnms and the less perfect, but more humanly feasible, reconciliation in Brabdingnag. To these political orders are opposed such societies as that of the Lilliputians, which is elaborately administered disorder, the tyrannies of Laputa and Maldonada, and the savage democracy of the Yahoos. *Gulliver's Travels* is a tribute to the mixed States in which order is reconciled with freedom and yet made stable. To achieve such an order, one must come to terms with the nature of power, and the most essential feature of power is its tendency to become absolute.

Lilliput, governed by the spirit of opposition. The political order deserves consideration. In Lilliput, Gulliver becomes the absolute weapon of an Emperor whose only wish is to conquer the world (even though his world consists of two small island). The spirit of opposition governs the world of Lilliput. There is a violent faction at home, and the danger of an invasion by a most potent enemy from abroad. The occasions for dispute are so trivial as to be meaningless. The power-drive creates its own pretexts. Within the State, the factions are rivals for influence and favour. Ministers are chosen by their skill in walking on a tight rope or jumping over sticks, and by their subservience. The language of the court is a constant exercise in creating confusion. When the King's clemency is declared, his subjects run for cover. When Gulliver hastily puts out the fire in the Empress's palace by the quickest means available, the court accusation is a strange mixture of insinuation, self-importance, and legal jargon :

> "Whereas it is enacted that whoever shall make water within the precincts of the royal palace shall be liable to the pains and penalties of high treason ; notwithstanding, the said Quinbus Flestrin (*i.e.*, Gulliver), in open breach of the said law, under colour of extinguishing the fire kindled in the apartment of his Majesty's most dear imperial consort, did maliciously,

> traitorously, and devilishly, by discharge of his urine, put out the said fire kindled in the said apartment, lying and being within the precincts of the said royal palace, against the statute in that case provided, ..." (Part I, Chapter 7)

Or, again, Gulliver is accused of preparing to make a voyage to Blefuscu "for which he has received only a verbal licence from his Imperial Majesty".

Gulliver's readiness to adapt himself to Lilliputian politics. What is even more effective than the crazy logic of Lilliputian politics is Gulliver's readiness to adapt himself to it. A bluff,* well-meaning Englishman twelve times their size and able to destroy them with ease, he feels dazzled by the honours paid to him and the high status he has won at the court. Gulliver is restrained partly by oath, partly by his sense of gratitude, but partly also by a naive readiness to assume that power brings rights. This becomes clear when, at the court of Brabdingnag, he reveals his belated schooling in Machiavellian state-craft and offers to the horrified king the gift of gunpowder. Gulliver's disappointment at the rejection of this proposal is strong, and this is how he comments on the rejection :

> "A strange effect of narrow principles and short views ! That a prince should from a nice, unnecessary scruple, whereof in Europe we can have no conception, let slip an opportunity put into his hands, that would have made him absolute master of the lives, the liberties, and the fortunes of his people." (Part II, Chapter 7)

The political structure in Brobdingnag. In contrast to Lilliput, Brobdingnagians have laws of no more than twenty-two words, and it is a capital crime to write a comment upon any law. Instead of a professional army they have a citizen militia where "every farmer is under the command of his own landlord and every citizen under that of the principal men in his own city, chosen after the manner of Venice by ballot". The militia fixes power in the whole body of the people rather than permitting the army to become an uncontrollable group such as we know in Latin-American politics today, and controls the disease that has attacked Brobdingnag, as it has every other nation : "the nobility often contending for power, the people for liberty, and the King for absolute dominion".

Politics in the Houyhnhnm-land. In the land of the Houyhnhnms, we find an anarchy of reasonable creatures. The rational horses need no government. They immediately intuit† their duties and perform them. Only in a rare instance where a novel situation is created (as by Gulliver's presence), must they deliberate. They control any dissidence by rational persuasion and exhortation because they need no compulsion. There is no need to exert

*Bluff : blunt ; frank ; hearty.

†Intuit : know by intuition ; receive knowledge by direct perception.

continuous pressure for conformity among the Houyhnhnms. They just agree in all matters except occasionally, and even in the situation which Swift presents, the Houyhnhnm master hesitates to assent only because of Gulliver's furious resistance to being sent away. So far as religion is concerned, the reason of the Houyhnhnms inevitably produces agreement, and their piety is exemplary within the limits of their purely natural reason. We cannot blame them for finding fulfilment in what, for normal human beings, would be defects of liberty or failures of Christian faith.

Gulliver's inability to make necessary distinctions. Clearly Swift is demanding of his readers what he never grants to Gulliver, that is, the power to make necessary distinctions. We must separate the intuitive rightness of the Houyhnhnms' choice from the tyranny of conformity, and we must separate natural piety from rationalistic or anti-clerical deism. Gulliver fails to make the most important distinction of all—between *animal rationale* and *animal rationis capax* (*i.e.*, between the belief that man is a rational animal, and the belief that man is an animal capable of becoming rational). Only after long exposure to human folly and perversity does he give up the dream of man as a rational animal, but instead of coming to terms with what in fact he is, Gulliver immediately turns to truly rational animals, the Houyhnhnms, and hopes to become one of them. His pathetic whinnying and canter betray the foolish behaviour of a literal-minded convert.

Gulliver's account of English institutions. The same kind of problem occurs in the realm of politics. Gulliver's account of English institutions to the King of Brobdingnag betrays the corruptibility which those institutions give rise to. English laws are extremely complex, and they are "best explained, interpreted, and applied by those whose interest and abilities lie in perverting, confounding, and eluding them". There is no reconciliation between duty and interest, but instead a systematic perversion of duty by interest. In his account of Europe to his Houyhnhnm master, Gulliver makes explicit all that he has earlier unconsciously revealed. Lawyers are now "equally disposed to pervert the general reason of mankind in every other subject of discourse, as in that of their own profession" (Book IV, Chapter 5). This single example is typical of all the rest. Gulliver has come to recognize the nature of corruption, but his recognition is so belated and so passionate that he despairs of all politics. When he writes an account of his travels, he expects the world to reform at once. But, in this case at least, we have a third possibility firmly sketched in : the reformed mixed State of the Brobdingnagians, which mediates between duty and interest, conformity and freedom, and accepts the need for a power-structure but diffuses its control.

17

The Character and Life of the Laputans

The flying island, suggestive of the relationship of king and country. Gulliver's visit to Laputa, and to the subject land of Balnibarbi, has a more serious intention than one of ridiculing the Royal Society* of the time. The flying island, through its contemporary scientific interest, offers a political philosophy and a comment on man's relation to nature which go beyond the merely topical, beyond the particular scientific discoveries of the time and the relations of the kingdoms of England and Ireland at the time. The flying island, in its devious and sensitive oblique movements, suggests the relationship of king and country. Laputa is ultimately dependent upon Balnibarbi, its motions only allowed by the magnetic quality of the "King's dominions". It is this quality which has allowed the Laputan King to establish his power over the fixed land of Balnibarbi. But there is a mutual dependence, because if either side pressed its power too far the result would be general ruin. The King's last resource, in case of defiance from the populace of Balnibarbi, is to let the flying island drop upon their heads, but this would at the same time damage the adamant** of Laputa itself. As for the nobles and ministers, they are committed to the welfare of both lands because their estates lie on the continent below even though they attend at the Laputan court. The balance of power, and the delicate relationships which exist between a king and those whom he governs, are very well represented by the conditions in Laputa and Balnibarbi.

Man dependent upon and limited by other men and by the laws of nature. Further, the relation of the greater and the lesser magnets, Laputa and Balnibarbi, suggests the limited usefulness of that understanding of the laws of the universe upon which the Age of Newton so prided itself, and which is one of the main targets of Swift's satire in this part of the book. The Laputan King, for all his knowledge of cosmic circumstance, for all the ingenuity of his

*The leading scientific society in England, founded in 1645.

***i.e.*, loadstone or megnet.

flying island, is yet dependent upon the firm earth beneath him for every movement that Laputa can make. This means that, for all his theoretic achievement, man is in practice dependent upon and limited by other men and by the laws of nature. The astronomers of Laputa, in spite of their considerable knowledge, have their limitations. Their pursuit of second causes ends in inscrutable mystery.

The Laputans divorced from the everyday human concerns. The Laputans, though they are in human shape, are more obviously allegorical creatures than any in *Gulliver's Travels*. Their physical charac teristics certainly express their nature as do those of the Brobdingnagians or the Yahoos, but in a different way. Their effect is made, not through exaggeration or isolation of the physical but through a distortion of the physical. The Laputans have lost their human quality in their abnormal absorption in things remote from the concerns of men. With "one of their eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the zenith", they are completely absorbed in their own speculations and in the study of the stars. Their interests are entirely abstract, and they see nothing of the everyday practical world, ignoring the knowledge of the senses totally. The Laputan is "always so wrapped up in cogitation that he is in manifest danger of falling down every precipice, and bouncing his head against every post". As they scorn the evidence of the senses, the Laputans are "very bad reasoners", though very positive and dogmatic ones. Laputan thinking produces results as flimsy and useless as a spider's cobweb, such as Gulliver's ill-fitting suit, and the devastated countryside of Balnibarbi.

The Laputans' absorption in abstract sciences. The King and his court are devoted entirely to two subjects, music and mathematics, the most abstract sciences. The analogies between these two sciences serve to identify the Laputans as members of the Royal Society. The Laputans with their strong interest in music, mathematics, and astronomy, represent specifically the members of the Royal Society but more generally all those who turn away from the impressions of the senses and from the ordinary concerns of human nature in an effort to reach eternal truth. Swift's reference to the music of the spheres emphasizes this more general meaning. The Laputans spend hours at their instruments, preparing themselves to join in the music of the spheres, which they claim they can hear.

The exaggeratedly intellectual life of the Laputan males. The narrowness, to the point of inhumanity, of the Laputans is indeed stressed throughout. They have out themselves off completely from all that is humanly creative and constructive. Even their food approaches as nearly as possible to the rarefied atmosphere in which they live, for their meat is carved into geometrical shapes and their poultry trussed up "into the form of fiddles". Nor do they have any conception of physical or sensuous beauty, because they see beauty only in mathematical abstractions. As the world of

human beings cannot be adequately dealt with in mathematical terms, the wives of the Laputans have fallen into matter, escaping whenever possible into a life altogether physical and degraded, as exaggeratedly animal as that of their husbands is exaggeratedly intellectual.

The results of the Laputans' efforts, purely destructive. The King has no interest in "the laws government, history, religion, or manners of the countries" which Gulliver has visited, and his Kingdom of Balnibarbi is chaotic. Gulliver "could not discover one ear of corn, or blade of grass" except in a few places, during his journeys. (It may be recalled that the Kingdom of Brobdingnag was called a "simple Utopia of abundance" where government was conducted with practical goodwill and a due regard for traditional wisdom, and where the King thought his task to be one of promoting life, making two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow where only one grew before.) The Laputans produce a world of death, and the results of their efforts are purely destructive because their aims are too high and unrelated to real conditions. For instance, according to them, some day a palace may be built in a week, of materials so durable as to last for ever without repairing. In the meantime, houses are ruined, land is uncultivated, and people are starving.

Wrong-headed abstract conceptions, the basis of experiments at the Academy of Projectors. The activities of the members of the Academy of Projectors, though they involve experiment, are yet related to the abstract thinking of the King. For the most part, they are based on some wrong-headed abstract conception, and are really examples of reasoning downward, taking "the High Priori Road". They are aspects, therefore, of the modern tendency to ignore "the old forms" and to rely on a spider-like spinning of thought. By blending experiment and High Priori reasoning in the Academy at Lagado, Swift is able to show scientific "projects" as yet another example of the kind of thinking which leads away from the methods of a Christian and humanist tradition. Indeed, one of the projects is an exact allegorical equivalent of the process of reasoning downward to the foundations of plain experience. There is a most ingenius architect who has contrived a new method of building houses, by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation, which he tries to justify by the practice of those two prudent insects—the bee and the spider. Again, the notion of ploughing the land with hogs to save the charges of ploughs, cattle, and labour results, upon experiment, in no crop and a good deal of trouble and expense.

Aimless activity, distorted values, and a perversion of things. Such projects leave an impression of uselessness, dirt, temporariness, or death. An eminent member of the Academy has been busy for thirty years converting things into their opposites. Air has been made tangible and marble has been made soft; land is sown with chaff, and woolless sheep have been reared; the hooves of a living

horse are petrified. In short, the projects are conducted in an atmosphere of aimless activity, distorted values, and a perversion of things from their proper purpose. While the general effect of the images we associate with Lilliput and Brobdingnag is of man and other animals as vigorous physical beings, the effect of Laputa and its subject Kingdom of Balnibarbi is of a deliberate giving up of the physical and the vital for the abstract, the mechanical, and the unproductive. The prevailing images in Laputa and Balnibarbi are not of real people and animals, but of ruins, mechanical constructions, men who look like allegorical figures and women who are thought of in geometrical terms. Animals are only negatively present, as in the pathetic horses and sheep of the Academy. Laputa itself is a mechanical device, because the flying island expresses not only the Laputans' desertion of the common earth of reality but their conversion of the universe to a mechanism, and of living to a mechanical process.

Immortality not a cheering prospect. From Lagado, Gulliver goes to Glubbdubdrib, where again he is in a world of no-meaning, of delusion and death, a world which is darker even than Laputa. In the palace of the sorcerer who is the governor of the island, Gulliver has a series of strange interviews with the ghosts of the famous dead. Alexander and Hannibal, who were conquerors and destroyers, give particularly trivial answers to Gulliver's questions. We get a very gloomy picture of both the ancient and the modern worlds. Then follows the most sombre episode, relating to the Struldbrugs of Luggnagg. Here the lesson of Laputa is repeated with a greater seriousness. A right sense of values is here suggested through the figure of man, immortal yet still painfully recognizable. Gulliver, hearing of the immortals, cries out as in a rapture, exclaiming upon the wisdom and happiness which they must have achieved. Being born exempt from death, these immortals must have minds free, without the weight and depression of spirits caused by a constant fear of death. So Gulliver thinks. In fact, however, the immortal and aged creatures, though free from the fear of death, are yet as full of other fears and wretchedness as any other men. This means that, being what we are, we will yet always display those vices which as human beings we will always have, however long we may live. The Struldbrugs certainly do not have free minds, and for them the thought of endless life does not give rise to hopes of endless improvement in wisdom and virtue. They regard their immortality as a dreadful prospect even as other men regard their death, and indeed they long to die. Thus, we find that immortal man is still man, limited in his capacity for growth, sinful, fearful, and dissatisfied. Gulliver, who dreams of being a Struldbrug, has to learn that life is a serious, difficult, and moral undertaking, and that humanity being always the same there is no escape from our vices and our trivialities. Gulliver says that he grew "heartily ashamed of the pleasing visions I had formed; and thought no tyrant could invent a death into which I would not run with pleasure from such a life".

18

The Character of the Houyhnhnms, Not an Ideal to be Followed

No apparent positives in the fourth voyage. For a long time the fourth voyage of *Gulliver's Travels* was regarded as the outburst of a misanthrope who took pleasure in degrading human nature. Swift was hostile to all doctrines of the natural self-sufficency of man ; and the fourth voyage embodies that hostility. But while the object of attack in this vogage is established, it is not immediately clear, from the voyage itself, where any positive attitude is implied in the Houyhnhnms or in the other characters. The Yahoos clearly embody the negative intention and are to be condemned. The Yahoos illustrate what happens to man when he tries to live by nature. The Yahoos have degenerated because their feeble human reason has been overwhelmed by an irrational nature.

The modern view of the fourth voyage different from the old view. The fourth voyage is ambiguous not because of the Yahoos who, as indicated above, illustrate a negative position. The ambiguity lies in the position of Gulliver and, even more so, in that of the Houyhnhnms. It had long been believed that the function of the Houyhnhnms was to present an ideal of the true life of reason, an ideal to be admired even if it be unattainable. But now such a view is not accepted any longer. It has now been pointed out that the Houyhnhnms are not altogether admirable beings, and that they are actually sometimes absurd and even repellent. It has also been pointed out that our reaction to Gulliver's extreme devotion to them may be one of disgust. There is considerable truth in this view which is supported by many modern critics.

The Houyhnhnm master's absurd criticism of the human anatomy. There is much in the Houyhnhnms that we find to be unpleasant and unacceptable. The arguments offered by the speakers at the Assembly of the Houyhnhnms, about the nature and future fate of Gulliver and the Yahoos, for instance, show the characteristic coldness of the Houyhnhnm's race. Again, the Houyhnhnm to whom Gulliver refers as his "master", shows the characteristic self-satisfaction of his race when he criticizes Gulliver's physical qualities. This self-satisfaction is, indeed, carried here to the

point of absurdity. Gulliver's master criticizes the flatness of Gulliver's face, the prominence of his nose, his eyes placed directly in front so that he cannot look on either side without turning his head, the need for Gulliver to lift one of his fore-feet to his mouth in order to feed himself, and so on. This attitude of the Houyhnhnm master certainly goes against his race.

The Houyhnhnms' way of life not an ideal for us. Towards the end of the book we are introduced to a ship's captain whose name is Pedro de Mendez and who turns out to be one of the most attractive characters in the book. After meeting this man, we are struck by the contrast between him and the Houyhnhnms whose arrogance alienates us from them. Indeed, even Gulliver alienates us when we find him absorbed in his admiration of his former equine måster and avoids his own family to concentrate on the neighing of two English horses which he has bought and in whose company he spends several hours daily. It is likely that Swift has deliberately produced this effect on our minds in order to show that the Houyhnhnms are far from being a model of perfection and that they are, in fact, intended to show the inadequacy of the life of reason. In other words, Swift not only condemns the Yahoos for their evils but also looks sceptically at the Houyhnhnms who embody a life governed wholly by the rational faculty. In other words, Swift does not offer the Houyhnhnms' way of life as the kind of ideal which we should emulate. Thus there is in this part of the book no norm, positively and unambiguously suggested to the reader.

No consistent satiric norm in the first three voyages. It seems to be foreign to Swift's method to represent in one person or one race a state of things of which he fully approves. Swift was greatly attracted by the spirit of compromise or by what may be called the middle way. He had a strong feeling for existing forms and a dislike of innovation. Any suggestion of radical remedies was distrusted by him even as he presented it, and he would withdraw from it into irony, or fall back into compromise (as he does in the ambiguous *Argument Against Abolishing Christianity*). In *Gulliver's Travels* too, Swift adopts the same method. In the first two parts of the book, no one person or group of persons is put forward for our approval. Neither the Lilliputians nor the Brobdingnagians, nor Gulliver himself, can be regarded as a consistent satiric norm against which the moral and political shortcomings of the England of that time are to be precisely measured. Swift slips from one side to another according as his isolated satiric points require it, and we are at one moment to admire and at another to dislike the creatures of his imagination. Even in Laputa, several serious political schemes, such as the visionary project of persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the score of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue, appear among the absurdities of the projectors. Thus in none of the first three voyages are we left with a consistent standard embodied in any creature.

The portaryal of the Houyhnhnms in the fourth voyage. Likewise, in the fourth voyage the Houyhnhnms are not presented fairly and squarely for our unqualified approval. The radical primitivism and rationalism of the Houyhnhnms has not been offered to us as completely and thoroughly desirable. The portrayal of the Houyhnhnms is accompanied by an ironic and sceptical withdrawal on the part of the author. Swift, then, uses the Houyhnhnms not as a complete statement of the right kind of man or society, but as a satiric contrast in which good and less good are mixed. Several of the characteristics of the Houyhnhnms are intended to show their remoteness from, and their irrelevance to, the ordinary life and standards of mankind. Primitivism, for instance, is used precisely for this effect. The Houyhnhnms have great difficulty in understanding such humanly simple matters as Gulliver's clothes, his ship, and his writing. The Houyhnhnm master, in his dealings with Gulliver in Chapter 3, is not only unattractive, but unattractive in a particular way. Gulliver here tells us that his Houyhnhnm master brought him to meet his brethren "and made them treat me with civility because as he told them privately, this would put me into good humour and make me more diverting". This may be intended to reduce Gulliver's status and lower his pride. But this also produces an impression of the lack of humanity and sympathy in the Houyhnhnms, and their cold curiosity. The Houyhnhnm master's condemnation of Gulliver's physical characteristics also, as already pointed out above, shows the Houyhnhnms' inability to understand the human point of view. This condemnation shows, further, the Houyhnhnm master's self-righteousness and his determination to belittle the human race which in its own land claims to rule over the race of the horses.

Rational beings without any passions. The Houyhnhnms, we find, are alien and unsympathetic beings ; they are not mankind at its best. In fact, they represent a kind of life with which mankind has little to do. The Houyhnhnms are not human beings but virtuous animals, perfect but limited natural creatures. They are of a nature which is irrelevant to man. They are incapable of the heights as well as the depths to which mankind can reach. The Houyhnhnms have no shame, no temptations, no conception of sin. They are totally unable to understand the purpose of lying or other common temptations of mankind. They can live by reason because they have been created passionless. In man, as we know, the passions are apt to have the better of the reason and the result of this in its extrement form is seen in the Yahoos. But the Houyhnhnms have no passions to control. Gulliver thus describes the Houyhnhnms : "As these noble Houyhnhnms are endowed by nature with a general disposition to all virtues, and have no conceptions or ideas of what is evil in a rational creature, so their grand maxim is to cultivate reason and to be wholly governed by it."

No natural affections and no fear of death in the Houyhnhnms. In the Houyhnhnms nature and reason are identical. They have no natural affections in the human sense. Nature has taught them to be equally benevolent to everyone, and to make a distinction of persons only on the rational grounds of a superior degree of virtue. They undertake marriage simply as "one of the necessary actions in a reasonable being". They have no fear of death either. They treat death with the same complete absence of emotion that they show towards every other event. These attitudes are not those which nature teaches human beings. Man has affections and passions, and Swift does not seem to regard them as wholly bad. The painful fear of death in mankind was a subject which particularly interested and affected him, and the curious episode of the immortal Struldbrugs in the third voyage is an attempt to deal with it. The Houyhnhnms are rational even in those things in which the wisest man's passions inevitably and even perhaps rightly rule him.

Human beings different from both the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos. The Houyhnhnms believe that nature and reason are sufficient guides for a reasonable animal. Man, according to this view, has no right to lay claim to the life of reason because in him reason and nature are not identical and because there is in his nature something which is outside the legitimate control of reason. But that does not necessarily mean that man's nature is thoroughly evil and his situation hopeless, as is the case of the degenerate Yahoos. Nor is man treated by Swift in these terms. Gulliver and the other human beings in Part IV are clearly distinguished not only from the Houyhnhnms but also from the Yahoos ; and the differences in their mental and physical habits from both the other races are strongly emphasized. The human beings stand apart from both the races of this animal world. They possess characteristics which are proper to humanity and which are understood neither by the naturally virtuous and rational Houyhnhnms nor by the vicious and irrational Yahoos. May does indeed share the Yahoos' tendency to evil, but he has compensating qualities which the bestial Yahoos have not possessed since their first degeneration. With these compensating qualities man surpasses the cold rational virtue of the Houyhnhnms also.

Love, pity, and gratitude not valued by the Houyhnhnms. The member of the Houyhnhnms race who is treated with most sympathy by Swift is the humble sorrel nag who acts as an escort for Gulliver and who belongs to the servant-breed of the Houyhnhnms. There is in the rational mind of this nag some near-human warmth and devotion, and he is the only creature in Houyanhnm-land to show any affection. When Gulliver sails away, this nag cries out to him : "Take care of thyself !" With this slight exception there is no sign among the Houyhnhnms of kindness, compassion, or self-sacrifice. Yet elsewhere in the book there is a sympathetic

treatment of the human qualities of love and pity which are very different from the Houyhnhnms' equal benevolence, detachment, and rational respect for virtue. Even in Part I, there is an insistence on the importance of gratitude among the Lilliputians who regard ingratitude as a capital crime (Chapter 6). In Part II there is the toleration of the giant King, and the affection between Gulliver and the protective nurse who looks after him. In Part IV great prominence is given to the captain and crew of the ship which rescues Gulliver.

Gulliver, a misanthrope at the end. The Portuguese sailors in Part IV are portrayed as admirable human beings. Swift emphasizes in them the very qualities which the Houyhnhnms neither possess nor understand. It is Don Pedro who persuades Gulliver to give up his plan of living as a recluse, and to commit himself once more to the human relationships proper to mankind. Gulliver's duty, as Don Pedro sees it, is a return to a life of humanity, tolerance, and affection among his own people. However, Gulliver's behaviour towards his own family shows him to be almost crazy. Only with difficulty can Gulliver endure the sight of the wife and children for whom he had always shown such a charming affection in the past. Gulliver, once a normal affectionate human being, is now a solitary misanthrope. To this point has Gulliver been led by his pride in reason unaided by other qualities. He has become inhuman, and has lost the human virtues in his attempt to achieve something for which humanity is not fitted. He is ruined as a human being, and the failure of his fellows to attain his own alien standards has made him hate them.

The rationalism of the Houyhnhnms, inadequate and inhuman. In short, neither the Houyhnhnm master nor the misanthropic Gulliver who once thought so highly of mankind is presented as an ideal of behaviour. Like all the peoples in this book the Houyhnhnms have some qualities such as honesty and truthfulness which we might well try to acquire, but on the whole they represent an inadequate and inhuman rationalism, and the negativeness of their blameless life is part of Swift's deliberate intention.

19

"Gulliver's Travels" : Its Structure

Uncertainties and surprises in the narrative. The book *Gulliver's Travels* is a satirical work which embraces many levels of intention and execution. Most accounts of imaginary societies sooner or later give themselves away by allowing their underlying logic to become too apparent, so that when there are no further surprises in store the effect becomes monotonous. In this sense there is nothing obvious about *Gulliver's Travels*. The book keeps our interest at every point because we are never able to anticipate what is going to happen, and when something does happen we are not always sure what our response should be. The contradictory details and incongruities in the narrative add to our perplexities. Despite all the differences between *A Tale of a Tub* and *Gulliver's Travels*, the two books are similar in creating tension by means of the uncertainities and surprises to which the reader is exposed.

Two contrasts in the book. *Gulliver's Travels* begins like a genuine account by an actual ship's surgeon, and the reader of 1726 might well have wondered, until he came to Gulliver's awakening after coming to shore, whether this was not a book of sober fact. Gulliver is perfectly in character—a Cambridge man, scientifically-minded, curious to observe the manners and dispositions of foreign lands, and a competent linguist. The world was full of just such professional sailors who felt that, in publishing accounts of their travels, they were contributing to scientific knowledge. Gulliver's prose style is of the kind which had the approval of the Royal Society ; it is seemingly matter-of-fact, free of literary colouring, recording observed details with the fullness and precision of some scientific instrument. As an imaginary voyage, *Gulliver's Travels* is a superb parody, which preserves much of the spirit and the imaginative principle of the real voyages. But if this is the main contrast that runs through the book, we are sometimes aware of another contrast. There are moments when we have to ask ourselves whether our imaginary voyage is not becoming a parody of itself—whether, for instance, the utopian elements are not slyly humorous. Furthermore, as the political allegory comes and goes we are left with further questions and further points of reference to keep track of. The tone modulates from that of a harsh indictment of crime and folly to one of good-natured fantasy. It was once

assumed that Gulliver and Swift were, to all intents and purposes, the same person ; but subsequently it was realized that Swift had created a fictional character. However, this realization has not put an end to our troubles. To say that Gulliver is not Swift but an imaginary character, merely raises a new set of questions. Who is Gulliver ? What is it that happens to him ? How have he and his experiences been contrived by this satirist who has succeeded in writing an amusing book that has never ceased to "vex" the world ?*

Three strands in the first pattern. We can understand the structure of *Gulliver's Travels* by considering certain patterns that seem to run through the book. The most obvious of these patterns has already been indicated above. Three strands enter into this : the account of actual travels, the imaginary voyage, and a parody of the latter. In other words, we have a basic theme, a variation on the basic theme, and sometimes a variation on the variation. The utopian passages in both Part I and Part IV look in two ways at once. The Lilliputians have—or once had—many admirable institutions, but these sometimes overreach themselves in the way that utopian institutions have always done ever since the time of Plato. The nurseries for childern of noble and high birth are run on admirable principles, and it is no doubt well that there are provisions which make it impossible for these children to be spoiled by their doting parents, but only a confirmed utopia-maker could have devised one in which the parents can see their children only twice a year, with their visits lasting not more than an hour, where they are allowed to kiss the children only at meeting and parting, where they are not allowed to whisper to their children or use any affectionate expressions or bring any presents in the shape of toys and sweet-meats. The utopia of horses, filled with the sound of whinnying, hoof-beats, and the champing of oats, is a rational community, true enough, but in outdoing all other utopias in point of consistency the satire directed at man's irrationality suggests that it might extend itself to include his dreams of the good society.

The second pattern, underlying the sequence of the four voyages. A second pattern is the one underlying the sequence of the four voyages. It seems to be a weakness in the structure that, Part III should intervene between Gulliver's experiences in Brobdingnag and his later experiences in the country of the Houyhnhnms. But what appears to be a fault from the purely logical point of view seems to justify itself from the artistic point of view. In the first voyage (in Part I), we are not sure for some time, nor is Gulliver, about the true nature of the Lilliputians and their civilization, and though, eventually, Gulliver has good cause to conclude that these diminutive people are as contemptible morally as they are small in stature, this discovery does not leave him inwardly moved. Part II

* In a letter to Alexander Pope, Swift wrote that his object was to vex the world.

is more rigorous than this. Not only are the experiences less ambiguous but they bite more deeply into Gulliver's sensibilities. Part IV really begins, psychologcially, where the second leaves off, for the intensity of Gulliver's reactions produces in him a state of shock which causes him to lose his self-esteem as one of the human race. The intervention of the third voyage, scattered in its effects and only once (in the episode of Struldbrugs) producing a marked psychic reaction on Gulliver's part, is almost a functional necessity. Like the scherzo* in a traditional four-movement symphony, it comes between the second and the fourth movements to break the tension and prepare the way for a stronger climax than could otherwise be achieved. This is only one of several details which it is easy enough to make out in this sequential pattern. The contrast given to us in the first two voyages between little men and big men may be an obvious one, but into it has gone the cosmic imagination of an age which had produced Boyle, Locke, and Newton—an age which thought of man as situated on the isthmus of his middle state, but permitted to catch glimpses through the microscope and the telescope of the created forms that filled the universe. But, if the pigmy-giant sequence might have occurred to almost anyone, the final sequence which takes us from societies of human beings into a world of animals is worthy of Swift's comic wit. Rational animals were not new in literature. Nor was the idea that man, in abdicating reason, sinks lower than the beasts. Swift's originality lies in devising a series of experiences of which the last is a violent and preposterous variation of those which have preceded. Gulliver, having seen himself in relation to little men in Part I and then big men in Part II, is finally and suddenly forced into comparison not with men at all but with animals in Part IV. This last situation is further complicated in so far as the comparison is not simple but complex, because there are two orders†† of animals between which poor Gulliver stands dubiously. For Swift and his original readers what was essentially involved in Part IV was an outrageous paradox. Man and animal belonged to different levels of creation ; they were forms for ever separate, related to one another not through any natural principles of growth and continuity but as links in the chain of being. The resolution of the paradox is afforded by the obvious moral symbolism which is present throughout the fourth voyage ; man may so live as to be worthy of his God-given status ; on the other hand he may, be forfeiting his humanity, become repulsive and bestial.

The third pattern : the ironic mode. The third pattern might be described as the ironic mode in which much of *Gulliver's Travels* has been cast. By means of this pattern, control is exercised over

* "Scherzo" is a musical term meaning an independent composition.

†† namely, the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos.

the book as a whole and over many of the details. The irony here is of a kind that came naturally to more than one eighteenth-century writer, Goldsmith being another who understood its use. The narrative and dramatic literature of the Enlightenment* dealt freely with current ideas, but did so in its own way. Theories about man and society appear constantly in the plays and narratives of the period, and frequently assume major importance as a thematic element. These concepts and principles are often brought before us in a perfectly direct and straightforward manner, and are to be understood as generalizations to which everyone subscribes as a matter of course. But there is another method of presentation which is also employed and which often alternates with the first in the same work. In the latter case, the ideas are introduced through the distorting medium of some character who is made to voice them in his own fashion or to colour them with his own experience. The question where direct and public statement ends and dramatic presentation takes over is sometimes difficult for the reader to decide. The question is : What is straightforward and what is ironic (by virtue of a double point of view brought into play) ? It is through the use which Swift has made of his central character, Lemuel Gulliver, that he has created a masterpiece of eighteenth century comic art. The positive doctrines and precepts appearing in this book were all of them familiar to Swift's time. It is the ironic refraction supplied by Gulliver that gives rise to the extraordinary effects.

The comedy of exploration and exclusion. Comedy, in Swift, is sometimes the comedy of discontinuity. We strip, we analyze, and we are shocked by the discrepancy which we find between appearance and reality. Again, we have what we come to recognize as comedy in terms of a special situation : a certain state of affairs begins to define itself, becomes increasingly and arrogantly certain of its own identity, and grows, expands, improvises, aggrandizes itself at the expense of everything within reach. The digressions in *The Tale of a Tub* and the enthusiasm of Peter and Jack as depicted in the fable of the coats illustrate this second mode. But the comedy of *Gulliver's Travels* is something different from both these types. It is a comedy of what we may call exploration and exclusion. Only once in the course of all the four voyages do we have an episode which turns upon sudden exposure. When Gulliver, on hearing of the Struldbrugs, assumes that they are universally envied for their immortality he is permitted by his hosts to indulge in eloquent praise of the blessings of long life before being shown the repulsive truth. Ordinarily Gulliver is not deceived in this manner by outward appearances only to learn the actual state of affairs in a moment of horrible revelation. Nor has he created any of the situations in which he finds himself. He is projected by the forces of Nature into a number of strange societies which he proceeds to

* *i.e.*, the 18th century

explore somewhat in the manner of a modern cultural anthropologist. He is a perfectly normal Englishman who has never known what it means to be a misfit or an unacceptable eccentric. When he awakens to find himself among the Lilliputians his first feeling is one of mingled astonishment and curiosity. The earlier experiences which he undergoes leave him of two minds about this society, for he sees the shortcomings of the little people and at the same time acquires genuine respect for their original institutions. But on further acquaintance the Lilliputians reveal themselves as thoroughly contemptible. They have, meanwhile, turned against the giant in their midst, but by this time Gulliver's self-esteem is not to be affected by any judgment which such people can pass against him. He has made his explorations ; he finds himself an object of hatred ; but he in turn has rejected this entire society. Back again in England, he is psychologically quite unaltered. But Brobdingnag produces a different kind of reaction. Again there is exploration, and again an element of uncertainty in the earlier stage. The first of the giants whom Gulliver encounters are not, except the nine-year girl who becomes his nurse, particularly admirable people, and his first master almost works him to death out of sheer greed. Are the Brobdingnagians to prove as coarse in sentiment as they are big in size ? When Gulliver reaches the court he finds that the aristocracy bear an entirely different character. Yet throughout his entire stay among the giants, the sense of security which he has in the presence of this amiable race is mixed with a feeling of nausea caused by the sights and smells which he must endure. There is, however, nothing ambiguous about the judgment which is eventually passed, not upon Gulliver as an individual but upon Europeans as a people, who are declared to be "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth." This is a new experience for Gulliver who for the first time in his life finds himself rejected as an unwholesome deviate, though hitherto he has been a normal and acceptable person. His response to the situation is to seek protection in a newly-acquired pride and to convince himself not only that the estimable characteristics of the Brobdingnagians are absurd but that European civilization has virtues which these people clearly do not possess.

The third pattern in the climactic fourth voyage. This pattern of ironic refraction and the comedy of exclusion almost drops from sight in Part III but it becomes the compositional principle behind the climactic fourth voyage. Here the exploratory element has been reduced to a minimum. From the first, by a flash of intuition, Gulliver is convinced of the moral virtues of the Houyhnhnms, and the recognition scene in the second chapter leaves him under the necessity of acknowledging the close physical resemblance between himself and the detestable Yahoos. Part IV is almost entirely exclusion—the overwhelming emotional experience of one who is brought to see himself and his class as hopelessly

tainted and deserving banishment from any rational society. However, Gulliver remains a figure in a comedy even though he suffers a sudden conviction of guilt and displays an extraordinary capacity for self-torture. That is the paradox which many readers fail to grasp. *Gulliver's Travels* vexes ; but it is still, in more ways than one, the merry work that Dr. Arbuthnot called it. In this book Swift's comic vision found a perfect expression.

20

The Use of Irony in "Gulliver's Travels"

The meaning of Irony. Irony is one of the most important weapons of satire. Irony arises from a contrast, a contrast between appearance and reality, between what a character or the author says and what he really means to convey, between what a character thinks himself to be and what he really is, between what a character believes and what the reader knows to be actually the case, between what a character thinks what he will do or achieve and what he really in the long run does or achieves, and so on. It may also be pointed out that, apart from irony in words, irony may exist in a situation. A situation is ironical when the reader knows all the facts of the case while the characters, either all of them or some of them, are ignorant of some of the facts of the case. Furthermore, irony may produce a comic effect or a tragic effect, depending upon the circumstances of the case. Thus we find abundant examples of irony in both the comic and the tragic plays of Shakespeare. This means that the use of irony by an author may amuse the reader or may sadden him all the more.

A destructive irony at work in "Gulliver's Travels". Swift is a comic and satirical writer (despite the tragic effect of some of his passages), and therefore his use of irony in his writings adds to the comic effect at which he aims. In *Gulliver's Travels* we find a plentiful use of irony. As Cazamian points out, *Gulliver's Travels* throws the light of a superior and destructive irony upon the smallness of the means, the vanity of the motives, the illusions of the catchwords, through which kings retained thrones and magistrates their offices in those days. It is not only the English political life of his time which Swift thus dissects. The monarchy itself, the paraphernalia that surrounded it, the courts and courtiers, the debating assemblies, the conflict of parties, the wiles of the favourites of both sexes—everything upon which, in fact, rested the contemporary administration of Europe—is fiercely attacked by ironical means. To serve the needs of his allegory, Swift carries us from the country of the dwarfs to that of the giants, and in the end to the country of the Yahoos and the noble horses. Mankind cuts a sorry and ugly figure in all these strange countries. Irony and allegory are, in this

book, fused in one. Swift is, indeed, a master of irony. However, it is noteworthy that his mockery does not have that kindly after-taste which is generally regarded as the distinctive mark of the humorist, even though his effects are very often enlivened by humour.

The irony of situation in all the four Parts of "Gulliver's Travels". The irony of situation is to be found in all the four divisions of *Gulliver's Travels*. In Lilliput, Gulliver finds himself in the midst of people who are no more than six inches in height. In Brobdingnag, Gulliver finds himself in the midst of people of a giant size by comparison with whom he himself is a pigmy. In Laputa and in Balnibarbi he finds himself among people who are queer in one way or another. Finally, he finds himself in the midst of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms, the former bearing a close physical resemblance to human beings and the latter being horses in their physical shape and appearance but having an intelligence much superior to that of human beings. In all these cases, Gulliver thinks himself to be literally among pigmies, giants, or horses as the case may be; but we realize that in each case Swift is giving us a portrayal of human beings themselves though the description of the various kinds of inhabitants of the different countries as determined by the requirements of the satirical intentions of the author. In the Lilliputians we recognize ourselves reduced to a small size. In th Brobdingnagians we recognize ourselves as seen through a magnie fying glass. In the Yahoos we again recognize ourselves, with the good qualities of human beings completely left out. In the Houyhnhnms we recognize ourselves though here our good qualities are idealized and carried to perfection, while our vicious side is completely omitted.

Verbal irony in the portrayal of the Emperor and the customs of Lilliput. In addition to the irony of situation, we have in this book plenty of verbal irony which arises largely from the contrast between what is said and what is really intended. Early in the book we have an example of this kind of irony when Swift describes the Emperor of Lilliput. As the Emperor is taller by the breadth of Gulliver's nail than any member of his court, his appearance is enough to strike an awe into the beholders. The Emperor's features are strong and masculine with an Austrian lip and arched nose, his countenance erect, his body and limbs well proportioned, all his motions graceful, and his deportment majestic. Now this description of the Emperor is clearly ironical because a person, who is just six inches or a little more than that in height, cannot be regarded as awful; and yet, as judged by the Lilliputian standards, the Emperor certainly strikes fear among his people by his greater height. The description is ironical in another sense also. In thus portraying the Emperor, Swift is having a laugh at the actual English monarch of the time, namely George I who could not be described as being graceful and majestic in his appearance. There is irony also in the remark which Gulliver subsequently makes when he describes the Emperor as a "most magnanimous prince",

Gulliver of course, means what he says, but Swift intends this remark as having just the opposite meaning. The diversions of the Emperor are also ironically described. These diversions consist in the candidates for his favour dancing on a rope or creeping under a stick or leaping over it. The rewards for the winners in these contests are silken threads of different colours. This whole account is an ironical reference to the sycophancy of the English courtiers of the time and the manner in which the Emperor rewarded them by an arbitrary conferment of titles and distinctions on them. The customs of the people of Lilliput are also ironically described. Gulliver remarks that the laws and customs in this empire were very peculiar and directly contrary to those of his own dear country, England. Gulliver then proceeds to describe those laws and customs as if they were indeed "peculiar" or even crazy; but actually many of these laws and customs are wholesome. All crimes against the State are severely punished in this country; but if a person, who has been accused can prove his innocence, the accuser is immediately put to death. These people look upon fraud as a greater crime than theft, and therefore seldom fail to punish it with death. In short, many of the laws and customs do credit to the Lilliputians, but they are described by Gulliver as if there were something wrong with them. We have another example of irony when we are told that the Emperor, wanting to give a lenient punishment to Gulliver, decided to have him blinded instead of ordering his death. Blinding the culprit is regarded by the Emperor as a lenient punishment though actually it is even more cruel than the penalty of death.

Verbal irony in the voyage to Brobdingnag. In the account of the voyage to Brobdingnag we have still more striking examples of the use of verbal irony. When Gulliver describes the features of the national life of his own country, namely England, to the King of Brobdingnag, the King makes certain adverse comments upon Gulliver's country. But Gulliver feels offended with the King because Gulliver thinks his country to be "the mistress of arts and arms, the scourge of France, the arbitress of Europe, the seat of virtue, piety, honour, and truth, the pride and envy of the world". Now Gulliver genuinely believes his country as possessing these qualities, but Swift means this description to be ironical, because Swift had just the opposite view of England. Subsequently Gulliver gives to the King of Brobdingnag a detailed description of the English parliament (including the House of Commons, and the House of Lords), the Courts of Justice, etc. The King finds fault with all these English institutions. Gullfver thereupon attributes the King's condemnation to the King's narrow-mindedness. Gulliver describes the members of the House of Lords to be champions always ready for the defence of their prince and their country by their valour, conduct, and fidelity. Gulliver describes them as the ornament and bulwark of the kingdom. Gulliver also gives high praise to the Lords spiritual. As for the members of the House of

Commons, Gulliver says that they are selected by the people for their great abilities and love of their country to represent the wisdom of the whole nation. Now Gulliver may mean all that he says here. But we can clearly see that Swift intends this praise to be ironical, and Swift uses the King of Brobdingnag to deflate Gulliver's pride in this context.

Irony in Gulliver's view of the narrow-mindedness of the Brobdingnagian King. On hearing the criticism and the condemnation of England and English people by the King of Brobdingnag, Gulliver says to himself (and to us) that great allowances should be made in the case of the King who lived a wholly secluded life from the rest of the world and was therefore completely unacquainted with the manners and customs prevailing in other nations. The lack of knowledge, says Gulliver, had produced many prejudices in the King, and a certain narrowness of thinking in him. Now all this is ironically intended by Swift becauase we know that the King's criticism was perfectly sound and justified. Swift continues this irony when Gulliver attributes the King's adverse reaction to his description of the destructive power of gunpowder to the miserable effects of the King's confined or limited education. Gulliver's comment on the King's horror on hearing about the gunpowder is : "a strange effect of narrow principles and short views !" According to Gulliver, the King suffers from "a nice unnecessary scruple". All this shows the irony of Swift because the King of Brobdingnag expresses a perfectly sound view which Gulliver attributes to narrowness and lack of adequate knowledge. The same kind of irony continues when Gulliver cannot understand the King's view that there is no need for books on the art of government and that a government should be run in accordance with the principles of common sense, reason, justice, and lenity.

Irony in the account of the third voyage. The use of irony by Swift may also be illustrated from the third voyage of Gulliver. In the school of political projectors in Lagado, professors are working upon schemes for persuading monarchs to choose favourites upon the basis of their wisdom, capacity, and virtue ; for teaching ministers to consult the public good ; for rewarding merit, great abilities, and eminent services ; for choosing for employments persons qualified to work efficiently ; and so on. The irony here lies in the fact that, while all these schemes are perfectly sound and wholesome, Gulliver describes them as wild, impossible chimeras* or impractical and fanciful notions. These schemes are being equated with the really absurd projects such as the one for extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers. The irony here arises from the contrast between the apparent meaning and the underlying intention of the author. There is irony also in the description of the method used by the King of Luggnagg to put to death those courtiers with whom he was offended. Gulliver here tells us that

* i.e., fanciful or unrealistic ideas.

this King was really kind-hearted in so far as he got the floor of his apartment properly wiped and cleaned after a particular courtier had been killed by means of the poisonous powder which had been scattered on the floor. On one occasion the floor was not properly cleaned and an innocent courtier died of the poison that had unintentionally been allowed to remain on the floor. But the King did not take any action against the servant who had failed to clean the floor. The whole passage in this context is ironical and brings out, by the use of irony, the fact that to a King the life of a courtier had little meaning. Then there is irony in Gulliver's dream of immortality and the advantages which he thinks can result to a man if he is made immortal. This passage becomes ironical in the light of the subsequent description of the wretchedness and misery of the Struldbrugs who are a group of immortal persons.

Gulliver, a victim of irony in Part IV of the book. It is believed by some that in Part IV of the book Swift's portrayal of the Houyhnhnms is also ironical and that Swift did not really mean to hold up the Houyhnhnms as representing a utopian ideal. This, however, is a moot point. But about Swift's use of irony in describing Gulliver's mentality and outlook in the two or three closing chapters, we can have no doubt. Swift certainly does not approve of the complete and absolute misanthropy which Gulliver has developed by the end of his final voyage. Swift therefore gives us an ironic description of Gulliver's whole behaviour at this stage. In other words, Gulliver himself now becomes a target of Swift's irony and satire.

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Important Questions with Complete Answers

Q. 1. *Gulliver's Travels* **is primarily an adventure story and a fanciful account of strange and wonderful lands, and therein lies its real charm." Elaborate and illustrate.**

Or

Gulliver's Travels **is first of all a novel of adventure and a tale of wonder." Do you agree with this view ? Give a reasoned answer.**

Ans. A classic for young readers as an adventure story. There is no doubt that *Gulliver's Travels* is a story of adventure and that it has several elements in it of a fairy tale. Both adventure and fairy-elements in a story appeal greatly to the young mind. They have some charm even for the adult mind. But it would be an incorrect view to regard *Gulliver's Travels* as merely an adventure story or a fairy tale intended for the entertainment and diversion of young people. *Gulliver's tale* is an allegorical satire. In other words, there lies below the surface a deeper meaning. Swift's real purpose was to expose the follies, absurdities, and evils of mankind in general. However, this book has established itself not only as a satire on mankind but also as a classic for young readers.

Some of the difficulties faced by Gulliver in the course of his voyages. Let us, then, take a look at *Gulliver's Travels* as a tale of adventure which it doubtless is, and as a fanciful account of strange and wonderful lands. The book tells us the story of the various voyages of a man called Lemuel Gulliver. Every voyage is an adventure in itself. There is, first of all, the voyage to a country called Lilliput. Gulliver, in the course of his first principal voyage, gets ship-wrecked, and has to swim to the shore to save his life. On the sea-shore he falls into a sound slumber and, when he wakes up, he finds himself a prisoner in chains. In the course of his second voyage, Gulliver's ship is overtaken by a fierce storm which threatens to wreck the ship and engulf the sailors including Gulliver. However, when, after the storm, the ship casts anchor, and a few sailors including Gulliver himself, are sent to the shore, Gulliver finds himself a captive in the hands of a giant. In the course of

his third voyage Gulliver's ship is overtaken by pirates. The pirates treat Gulliver roughly and, after depriving him of all his belongings, put him on a small boat and set him adrift. Five days later, the boat touches a rocky island where Gulliver gets down, very low in spirits and feeling tired and desolate. In the course of his fourth voyage, Gulliver is attacked by the members of the crew of his own ship and is bound hand and foot. Most of the members of this crew had previously been pirates, and now they threaten to throw Gulliver into the sea if he puts up any resistance. After a few days, the ruffians put Gulliver down on the sea-coast and sail away, leaving him alone to fend for himself. Gulliver finds himself in a new country about which he knows nothing at all.

A story of risks and dangers. The above brief account of the various voyages of Gulliver shows the difficulties and dangers that Gulliver faced in the course of his wanderings. Adventure always implies a risk of life or a danger to life. The man who has the spirit of adventure in him is always ready to face risks and dangers. Gulliver sets out from a comfortable life at home in order to explore unknown countries, knowing full well that he will face many difficulties and hazards. But every time he goes on a fresh voyage willingly and experiences not only difficulties and hardships but also serious dangers to his life. It is a miracle that each time he returns home safely. Such a story is bound to fascinate the young mind because dangers and difficulties never fail to appeal to young people.

The amusing experiences of Gulliver in the strange country of dwarfs. Then there are the strange experiences of Gulliver in various lands. Every land which Gulliver visits is a wonderful land, and Gulliver's experiences in every land are strange or exciting, or amusing. In Lilliput the people are diminutives or dwarfs, hardly six inches in height. The very idea that there are human beings so small is funny. But more amusing than that is the manner in which Gulliver is fed. Several ladders are applied by the Lilliputians to his sides, and about a hundred of them climb up those ladders in order to carry baskets full of meat and drink and put them close to his mouth. Similarly, it has taken nine hundred Lilliputians three hours to raise Gulliver to the level of a huge carriage by which he is carried to the royal court. In the metropolis, Gulliver becomes an object of curiosity, and people come from far and near to look at him. He is given the name "man-mountain". Gulliver here lends his support to the King and the government of Lilliput against the island of Blefuscu which has been hostile to Lilliput, and he cripples the enemy fleet, thus winning the appreciation and admiration of the Lilliputian king. One of the most amusing incidents in this part of the book is Gullver's extinguishing a fire in the Empress's apartment by urinating on it. The Empress feels greatly annoyed with this action of Gulliver and moves from that apartment to a different location. Some of the customs of the Lilliputians are also a source of amusement. For instance, they bury their dead with

the heads of the corpses directly downwards because they hold a belief that after eleven thousand moons the dead would rise from their graves and that during this period the earth would turn upside down so that the dead would, on coming back to life, find themselves standing on their feet. Another comic absurdity of the Lilliputians is their manner of writing which is very peculiar, being neither from the left to the right, like that of the Europeans ; nor from the right to the left like that of the Arabians ; nor from up to down like that of the Chinese ; nor from down to up like that of the Cascagians ; but aslant from one corner of the paper to the other, "like the ladies in England". Gulliver has to go through an ordeal when, on being informed that he will be shortly impeached on several charges, he finds it necessary to make good his escape from this country.

Gulliver's exciting experiences in the country of giants. In Part II of the book we find ourselves with Gulliver in another strange and wonderful land. This land is called Brobdingnag. This land is inhabited by monstrous-looking giants who are twelve times the height of Gulliver. By contrast with these huge-looking men, Gulliver thinks himself to be as small as the Lilliputians were by contrast with him. Here too Gulliver becomes an object of curiosity for the inhabitants, though for the opposite reason. When Gulliver is first shown by his captor to his wife (who is as huge in size and proportions as her husband), she screams and runs away as a woman in England might do at the sight of a toad or a spider. In other words, Gulliver looks like an insect to the people here. The youngest son in the family of Gulliver's captor lifts Gulliver by the legs and holds him so high in the air that Gulliver begins to tremble with fear. Then Gulliver sees a cat which is three times larger than an ox in England, and he feels greatly alarmed by its fierceness. When the lady of the house begins to suckle her child, Gulliver feels thoroughly disgusted on seeing the huge, monstrous breasts of the woman, with their nipples about half of the bigness of Gulliver's head. When Gulliver wakes up from his sleep, he is attacked by a couple of rats which are of the size of a big dog. When Gulliver is afterwards bought by the Queen, he becomes a favourite with her. As a consequence, the royal dwarf begins to feel jealous of Gulliver and plays much mischief with him. On one occasion, the dwarf makes Gulliver fall into a large bowl of cream. On another occasion, he thrusts Gulliver's whole body into a bone from which the marrow has been taken out. Gulliver also feels uneasy for another reason. There are too many flies in Brobdingnag. The flies here are very large, like all other creatures, and Gulliver feels much troubled by them as they hum and buzz about his ears. He is also much tormented by the wasps which are as large as the patridges in England. Referring to the royal kitchen Gulliver says that, if he were to describe the size of the kitchen-grate and the size of the pots and kettles, the reader would perhaps not believe him and think that Gulliver is guilty of exaggeration. There are several

mishaps during Gulliver's stay in Brobdingnag. Once an apple, falling from a tree, hits Gulliver on his back and knocks him down flat on his face, because the apples here are also very large. On another occasion, when is standing on a grassy plot, there is a sudden shower of hailstones which are nearly eighteen hundred times as large as those in Europe. Gulliver is badly injured by these hail-stones. The royal maids of honour often play with Gulliver as if Gulliver were a toy. On one occasion Gulliver is carried off by a monkey which is also very huge, and he is rescued with great difficulty. Eventually Gulliver is carried off by a huge eagle which drops him into the sea from where he is picked up by a passing ship. This is Gulliver's last adventure on his second voyage.

Gulliver's account of the life in Laputa, Lagado, etc. Laputa, the voyage to which is described in Part III of the book, is another wonderful land. Laputa is an island which keeps flying at a height of about two miles from the earth over the continent of Balnibarbi. This in itself is a miracle. The people of Laputa have strange shapes and faces. Their heads are all reclined either to the right or to the left, one of their eyes being turned inward and the other directly up to the zenith. Many of the Laputans are followed by flappers who carry in their hands blown bladders fastened to the ends of short sticks. The function of these flappers is to draw the attention of their masters to anything that might need their attention, because the minds of their masters are so occupied with intense speculations that they can neither speak nor listen to others without being roused by some external action. Another strange feature of life on Laputa is that mutton, beef, pudding, and other eatables are given geometrical shapes or the shapes of musical instruments. When these people want to praise the beauty of a woman or any other animal they do so in geometrical or musical terms. The men on this island are so busy in their cogitations that their wives feel compelled to make love to strangers instead of to their husbands. When Gulliver goes to Lagado, he witnesses the many experiments which are in progress at the Academy of Projectors. There is a project for extracting sunbeams from cucumbers, a project for restoring human excrement to its original food, a new method for building houses by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation, and so on. There are several schemes being developed at the school of political projects also. These are all very amusing and impractical schemes. Gulliver's visit to the island of Glubbdubdrib is also very interesting because Gulliver here finds himself in a place where ghosts and spirits are in attendance upon the governor and where Gulliver is enabled to hold conversations with the spirits of such great men of the past as Alexander, Hannibal, Aristotle, Homer, and Brutus. Gulliver also sees a group of immortal people in this place. These immortals are feeling wretched and miserable because they long for death which does not come to them.

The charm of these accounts. The appeal of all the first three voyages for the young reader is manifest from the above summary. There is plenty of fun and mirth in the accounts of these three voyages. Indeed, some of the episodes are bound to give rise to boisterous laughter among the readers. In other words, the description of some of the incidents is really hilarious. No wonder that one of the early commentators called *Gulliver's Travels* a merry work. It is evident, too, that improbability is the keynote of most of the incidents. The grown-up readers, for instance, will not even believe in the existence of Lilliputians and Brobdingnagians. But the young readers are bound to feel excited by descriptions of these strange people and their doings, and will not doubt the existence of pigmies and giants. For them the accounts of these people's life will have a charm of their own.

Yet another wonderland in Part IV of the book. The country of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms, described in Part IV, is also a wonderland. This is a country in which human beings are no better than beasts, while the horses show themselves to be superior to human beings. The horses or the Houyhnhnms are the noblest conceivable animals. They are wholly governed by reason ; they have a language of their own which they are able even to teach to a human being like Gulliver ; they have their own excellent customs and methods of government ; they are guided mainly by the principles of benevolence and kindness. These strange or marvellous beings are free from all kinds of evil, so much so that there is no word in their language for lying or falsehood. They hold a periodical assembly to discuss their affairs and to take necessary action to rectify things which have gone wrong ; they have their methods to control their population ; and they do not marry for love or for the pleasures of sex but only to reproduce and yet to keep their members under check. The Yahoos, who symbolize human beings, are on the contrary despicable creatures who arouse our disgust and abhorrence. This part of the story is not likely to appeal to the young mind very much because it is replete with symbolism the understanding of which is essential for the appreciation of the entire part. In this part, Swift's message is more important than the adventurous elements or the element of wonder and enchantment.

Not enough to describe the book as an adventure story. Finally, it must be pointed out that it is not enough to describe *Gulliver's Travels* merely as an adventure story or a tale of wonder. We must recognize that in it Swift has lashed human institutions and human passions. It is a satiric masterpiece in which Swift exposes human follies and absurdities, and the consequences of human irrationality.

Q. 2. **What are the objects of Swift's satire in *Gulliver's Travels* ?**

Or

What does Swift attack in *Gulliver's Travels* and how ?

Ans. Political satire in Part I of the book. In Part I we find Swift satirizing the manner in which political offices were distributed among the candidates by the English King in Swift's time. Flimnap, the Treasurer, represents Sir Robert Walpole who was the prime minister of England from 1715 to 1716 and then again from 1721 to 1742. Dancing on a tight rope symbolizes Walpole's skill in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues. Similarly, Reldresal represents Lord Carteret who was appointed by Walpole to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Again, the phrase, "one of the king's cushions", refers to one of King George's mistresses who helped to restore Walpole to favour after his fall in 1717.

More political satire. The ancient temple in which Gulliver is housed in Lilliput probably refers to Westminster Hall in which Charles I had been condemned to death. The search of Gulliver by the Lilliputians may have some reference to a committee which had been formed by the Whigs to investigate the conduct of the previous government and especially of Oxford and Bolingbroke who were suspected of treasonable relationships with France and the Old Pretender. Swift here seems to be satirizing the activities of that Whig committee.

Satire on the conferment of titles on favourites. The three fine silk threads which were awarded as prizes to the winners of various contests refer to the various distinctions which were conferred by the English King on his favourites. In other words, Swift is here mocking at the English King's conferment of distinctions on political favourites and supporters.

Satirical references to Queen Anne and to the impeachment of some Tory ex-ministers. Gulliver's account of the annoyance of the Empress of Lilliput at his having extinguished a fire in her apartment is Swift's satirical way of describing Queen Anne's annoyance with him for having written *A Tale of a Tub* in which Swift had attacked religious abuses but which had been misinterpreted by the Queen as an attack on religion itself. Gulliver's account of the conspiracy against him and his impending impeachment is Swift's satirical description of court-intrigues which were a feature of political life in England at that time. Swift here gives us amusing glimpses of what went on at the court of George I when Sir Robert Walpole was the most influential of the politicians. The articles of impeachment against Gulliver may be a satire on the actual impeachment in 1715 of four Tory ex-ministers.

Satire on religious strife and on political factions. Swift's satire becomes more amusing when Gulliver speaks of the conflict between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians in Lilliput. It is funny that, while one party believes that boiled eggs should be broken at the big end, the other party insists on breaking the eggs at the smaller end. In this account Swift is ridiculing the conflicts between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. He is making fun of hair-

splitting theological disputes. Swift also pokes fun at the political parties in England when he speaks of the two factions in Lilliput—the two factions being distinguished by their high heels and low heels respectively.

Satire on the coarseness of the human body in Part II. It is thus clear that Part I, in which all the above episodes occur, is largely a satirical representation of the English political and religious life of the time. In Part II, the satire becomes general. Here, Gulliver first gives us his reaction to the coarseness and ugliness of the human body. In Part II we meet the people of Brobdingnag who are giants in stature and who thus present a glaring contrast to the pigmies of Lilliput. If, in the description of the Lilliputians, Swift was looking at mankind through the wrong end of a telescope, in his account of the Brobdingnagians he is looking at mankind through a magnifying glass. Not only are the men and women here huge in size, but the animals like cats, rats, and monkeys, and insects like bees and wasps are also of enormous sizes. We are particularly repelled by the description of the huge, monstrous breasts of a woman which are revealed when she begins to suckle her child. We also get a brief satire on the great scholars of this new country when they offer their different explanations to their King about Gulliver's diminutive height as compared with the people of this country. The philosophers, however, agree about one point: that Gulliver could not have been produced according to the regular laws of nature, and that he is a freak product.

Satire on human pride and pretension. When Gulliver has given to the King an account of the life in his own country, of the trade, the wars, the conflicts in religion, the political parties, the King has a hearty laugh and asks Gulliver whether the latter is a Whig or a Tory. Then, turning to one of his ministers, the King observes how contemptible a thing is human grandeur which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as Gulliver. In other words, the King mocks at the human race of which Gulliver is a representative, a race which, as compared to the people of Brobdingnag, consists of insects. Swift is here ridiculing human pride and pretension. Human beings who have such lofty ideas about themselves are no better than insects in the eyes of the King of Brobdingnag.

A satirical description of beggars. The description of the crowd of beggars whom Gulliver happens to see in the metropolis of this country is intended as a satire on the beggars who actually existed in the city of Dublin. The sight is, indeed, horrible and disgusting. Among the beggars is a woman with a cancer in her breast ; there is a man with a huge tumour in his neck ; another beggar has wooden legs, each about twenty feet high. But the most hateful sight is that of the lice crawling on their clothes. This description reinforces Swift's view of the ugliness and foulness of the human body.

The bitterest satire in Part II. The bitterest satire in this part of the book comes when the King comments on Gulliver's account of the English parliament, the English courts of justice, and other institutions in England. The King's view is that the history of Gulliver's country seems to him to be only a series of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, banishments, etc. According to the King, all these are a result of hypocrisy, perfidy, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition. The King concludes his comment by expressing the view that the bulk of the people of Gulliver's country are the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth. These comments of the King almost sum up Swift's own cynical views about mankind in general.

Satire on destructive weapons and on political ideologies. But the satire in Part II does not end here. We have some more of it when the King reacts with scorn and disgust to Gulliver's account of the destruction which can be caused by means of gunpowder. The King's reaction is also significant when Gulliver informs him that in his country hundreds of books are written on the art of government. According to the King, only common sense, reason, and justice, and not books, are needed to run a government.

Satire on theoreticians and academics in Part III. The satire in Part III is not so bitter as in the closing chapters of Part II. The satire in Part III is, indeed, light-hearted. Here swift amuses us by making fun of the people whose sole interests are music and geometry and who do not even have the time to make love to their wives. We are also greatly amused by the useless experiments and researches which are going on at the Academy of Projectors in Lagado. The projectors here are busy finding methods to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to convert human excrement into its original food, to build houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, to obtain silk from cobwebs, and to produce books on various subjects by the use of a machine without having to exert one's brain. All this was intended as a satire on the kind of work the Royal Society in England was doing in those days. Swift here ridicules scientists, academics, planners, intellectuals, in fact all people who proceed according to theory and are useless when it comes to actual practice.

Satire on some contemporary events. In the account of the life in Laputa, Swift also satirizes the English system of administration, especially with regard to the Ireland of the time. The English government ruled Ireland from a long distance, and was thus not in direct touch with its Irish subjects even though some of the English politicians held property in Ireland. Swift also here gives us an allegorical account of the successful resistance of Ireland to William Wood's half-pence. There is, furthermore, an oblique reference to the Act of Settlement which had been passed in 1701. The new

agricultural methods in vogue in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century are also attacked by Swift.

Satire on historians and critics ; satire on the longing for immortality. There are two other noteworthy targets of satire in Part III. Swift satirizes historians and literary critics through Gulliver's interviews with the ghosts of the famous dead. The point of the satire here is that historians often distort facts and even manufacture facts, and that literary critics often misinterpret great authors like Homer and Aristotle. In the portrayal of the Struldbrugs, Swift satirizes the human longing for immortality. The immortal persons have grown so old, feeble, and infirm that they want to die but death does not come to them.

The satirical portrayal of the Yahoos in Part IV. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* contains some of the most corrosive and offensive satire on mankind. In this part the Yahoos are intended to represent human beings. The very initial description of the Yahoos given to us by Gulliver is repellent. Gulliver describes them as abominable, and he is both astonished and horrified on seeing the physical resemblance between them and persons of his own race. By contrast with the Yahoos, the Houyhnhnms are noble and benevolent animals who are governed by reason and who lead an orderly life. It is, indeed, a bitter criticism of the human race to represent the Houyhnhnms (who are horses) as being superior mentally and morally to the Yahoos (who represent human beings). The Yahoos are brutal, unteachable, and mischievous. The Houyhnhnms, on the contrary, are morally so good that there is no word in their language for lying or falsehood.

Gulliver's denunciation of the human race as represented by his own countrymen. The satire deepens when Gulliver gives to the master Houyhnhnm an account of the events and happenings in his own country and in other European countries. Gulliver tells his host that war in European countries was due sometimes to the ambition of kings and sometimes to the corruption of ministers. Gulliver speaks of the numerous deadly weapons which the European nations employ for destruction purposes. Gulliver then tells his host about the law-suits that are fought in English courts, and he speaks disparagingly about lawyers and judges. The whole of this account by Gulliver is an exposure of the evils of war and the wickedness of lawyers and judges. Gulliver also says that many people in his country ruin themselves by drinking, gambling, and debauchery ; and that many are guilty of such crimes as murder, theft, robbery, forgery, rape, and sodomy.

Satire on prime ministers. The account which Gulliver gives of the political life in his country is really a bitter criticism of the evils that prevail not only in England but in all countries of the world. The prime minister, according to Gulliver, is a person wholly free from joy and grief, love and hatred, pity and anger ; and he is a person with a violent desire for wealth, power, and

titles, and with no inclination ever to tell the truth about any matter. The vast numbers of the people of his country, Gulliver says, live by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating, pimping, forging, whoring, and so on. Indeed, this is not just satire but denunciation and invective.

More criticism of the Yahoos (symbolizing the human race). The master Houyhnhnm tells Gulliver of the habits and the way of life of the Yahoos. He speaks of the Yahoos' love of shining stones, their gluttony, and their weakness for liquor. The master also speaks of the lascivious behaviour of the female Yahoos. This criticism of the Yahoos is also intended as a criticism of the human race.

The want of reason in human beings. By contrast, the Houyhnhnms are excellent beings whose grand principle is to cultivate reason and be wholly governed by it. The Houyhnhnms hold periodical meetings at which the difficulties of various sections of the population are discussed and solved. The Houyhnhnms regulate their population and do not indulge in sexual intercourse merely for pleasure. Swift's purpose here is to attribute to horses certain qualities which would normally be expected in human beings but which are actually lacking in human beings. The main quality is reason or the rational quality which human beings, according to Swift, do not value enough.

Gulliver's reaction to his experience of the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver's reaction to what he has seen in the land of the Houyhnhnms fills him with so much admiration for them and with so much hatred and disgust for the human race that he has no desire even to return to his family. This reaction shows that Gulliver has become a complete cynic and misanthrope, thereby further emphasizing the follies and faults from which the human race suffers and on which Swift wanted to focus our attention. Gulliver concludes his account with a severe condemnation of human pride, so that pride may be regarded as yet another target of Swift's satire in this book.

The nature of Swift's satire. Swift shows himself as a great satirist in this book by giving us comic satire and corrosive satire, by his successful exposure, sometimes witty and sometimes indignant, of human irrationality, by his clever use of irony, and by other devices to makes us acutely conscious of the defects of mankind. If he omits the good side of mankind, it is because a satirist cannot afford to weaken the effect of his attacks by admitting the attractive features of his target or his victims. Still, it is possible to allege that Swift's vision of mankind is too dark and pessimistic and that his counsel is the counsel of despair. Swift's scornful and incisive satire on humanity is, indeed, a masterpiece even though it has a depressing and disheartening effect on us.

Q. 3. Do you think Swift's attack on man in Book IV of *Gulliver's Travels* to be convincing ? Justify your point of view.

Or

What is the gravamen* of Swift's charge against the human race in Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*? How far do you agree with him?

Or

Summarize, and comment on, Swift's impeachment of mankind in Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*.

Ans. Swift, a misanthrope in Part IV. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* is an angry denunciation of mankind. Here Gulliver gives expression to his misanthropy and cynicism. Gulliver feels so furious with the follies and the crimes of human beings that he condemns them wholesale, going to the extent of portraying the horses of Houyhnhnm-land as being far superior to human beings both mentally and morally. Of course, much of Gulliver's condemnation of the human race here may safely be attributed to Swift himself. Yet we should not make the mistake of identifying Swift completely with Gulliver here, and especially towards the close of Part IV where Gulliver expresses such a profound aversion to mankind and even to members of his own family that he himself appears to have become a target of Swift's satire. In other words, while Swift is certainly to be regarded as a misanthrope on the basis of Part IV, he is not a misanthrope of the extremest kind which is represented by Gulliver at the close of the book.

The three types of beings in Part IV. There are three types of beings who are portrayed in Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*. There are the human beings themselves, represented by Gulliver's countrymen of whom Gulliver gives a detailed account to his equine** master. Then there are the Yahoos who symbolize mankind in general with all the evil features of mankind greatly exaggerated and the good qualities of mankind completely eliminated. And, above all, there are the Houyhnhnms or the horses who, according to Gulliver, represent perfection. The human race is degraded in our estimation by the manner in which Gulliver directly describes his countrymen to his master. But the human race falls further in our estimation by contrast with the noble Houyhnhnms, and by resemblance to the beastly Yahoos.

The crimes of human beings, according to Gulliver's account. Let us first take a look at the way Gulliver directly describes his countrymen to his master in Houyhnhnm-land. Gulliver says that some people in his country are undone by law-suits; others spend all their money in drinking, whoring, and gambling, and many commit such crimes as treason, murder, theft, robbery, perjury, forgery, coining false money, rape, and sodomy. Gulliver explains that these crimes show the effects of the human desire for power

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* gravamen : the essence or the worst part of an accusation.

** equine master : the master who is a horse. ("Equine" means "pertaining to a horse").

and riches, of lust, of malice, and of envy. Now this picture of human beings is substantially correct. The only objection that can be raised against it is that all human beings are not guilty of such crimes, and that there are many good men also in all human societies.

The causes and the ravages of war, according to Gulliver. Next comes Gulliver's account of the reasons and circumstances which lead to war among nations. Sometimes the ambition of princes and sometimes the corruptions of ministers are responsible for war. Differences in opinion have been the cause of the loss of many millions of lives. Sometimes a war is started because the enemy is too strong, and sometimes because the enemy is too weak. Poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud ; and pride and hunger will always come into conflict. Gulliver then describes the destruction which a war causes : ships sunk with a thousand men ; twenty thousand men killed on each side ; dying groans ; limbs flying in the air ; flight ; pursuit ; fields littered with dead bodies which become food for dogs, wolves, and birds of prey ; etc. Now nobody can quarrel with Gulliver's analysis of the causes of war or his picture of the destruction of war. If anything, this description is an under-statement, and not an exaggeration. We may also note that, besides World Wars in the modern world, we constantly have smaller wars in different parts of the world, and the destruction caused by them is incalculable. The effect of Gulliver's description on his master is one of disgust with the human species.

Gulliver's denunciation of lawyers and judges. Then comes Gulliver's denunciation of lawyers, judges, doctors, and government ministers. Lawyers, according to Gulliver, know the art of proving by words that white is black and black is white, according as they are paid. Judges, says Gulliver, are persons appointed to decide all property disputes, as well as for the trial of criminals, and selected from amongst the most skilful lawyers who have grown old or lazy and who have been biased all their lives against truth and equity. These judges do not enter into the merits of the cases, but are loud, violent, and tedious in dwelling upon all those circumstances which are not to the purpose. Gulliver also describes lawyers as the most ignorant and stupid generation among us, the most despicable in common conversation, avowed enemies to all knowledge and learning, and disposed to pervert the general reason of mankind. Now, there is no doubt at all that lawyers are a hateful clan of people, as everyone who has ever dealt with a lawyer knows to his cost. Lawyers prolong litigation in order to fleece their clients ; they have hardly any scruples, their main object being to make money. Here and there we may find an honest lawyer but, as a class, they fully correspond to Gulliver's description of them. Even the judges nowadays are losing their integrity. They often fall under the influence of politicians and are sometimes themselves corrupt. Swift or Gulliver is of course talking of conditions in his own time but the conditions have in no way improved.

Gulliver's condemnation of physicians. Gulliver then tells his master that human beings eat when they are not hungry and drink when they are not thirsty ; that they sit whole night drinking strong liquor without eating a bit of food ; that prostitutes among the female sex of the human species acquire certain diseases which are transmitted to their customers and then propagated from father to son. To remedy this state of affairs there are physicians who administer all kinds of medicines and drugs to their patients without being able to cure them. These physicians, Gulliver goes on to say, are "of special use to husbands and wives who are grown weary of their mates, to eldest sons, to great ministers of state, and often to princes". There is no doubt that Swift is here rather too hard upon physicians. Certainly there are quacks who merely rob their patients of money without being able to cure their diseases ; but there are in our times, and there undoubtedly were in Swift's time, competent physicians who are a boon to society. Our debt to medical science cannot be described. At the same time, we must admit that even physicians and surgeons in our own times have developed an excessive love of money and have become too greedy.

A strong criticism of government ministers. Gulliver next speaks of ministers of state. The chief minister, according to him, is a person completely free from joy and grief, love and hatred, pity and anger ; his only passion being a strong desire for wealth and power and titles. A man may become a chief minister by making use of his wife, daughter, or sister ; he may become a chief minister by betraying his predecessor ; or he may become a chief minister by organizing agitations against the corrruptions of the court. The subordinate ministers excel in insolence, falsehood, and bribery. Here again Swift's description corresponds to facts. Politicians and ministers everywhere are unscrupulous persons who merely believe in acquiring wealth and wielding power. The welfare of the people is only their ostensible aim, not their real purpose. We in India are particularly the victims of politicians of this kind.

A one-sided picture of the occupations of mankind. Gulliver also informs his master that in his country the rich man enjoys the fruit of the poor man's labour, and that the poor people are a thousand times more in number than the rich. Gulliver adds that vast numbers of his countrymen are compelled to seek their livelihood by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating pimping, flattering, forging, gambling, lying, fawning, poisoning whoring, libelling, and similar other occupations. Here, no doubt, Swift is looking at one side of the picture only. There are millions of people in the world who follows these occupations. But there is a bright side to the picture also. Large numbers of people in every country earn their living by honest and hard labour, and they cannot be ignored. However, when Gulliver states the mercenary motives behind matrimonial alliances, he is perfectly right. Everyone who seeks a bride or a bridegroom is after money.

The Yahoos as representatives of the human race. The portrayal of the Yahoos intensifies the satire on the human race. The Yahoos closely resemble human beings in their physical appearance. In fact, Yahoos are meant to represent human beings, with the emphasis wholly and solely on the evil nature of human beings. Gulliver describes the Yahoos as filthy, and he finds them to be the most unteachable of all brutes, with the strongest disposition to mischief. Gulliver's master points out the Yahoos' love of shining stones, and this is undoubtedly a satirical reference to the human love of diamonds and other precious stones. Gulliver's master also refers to the Yahoos' gluttony, their weakness for liquor, and their susceptibility to disease. Gulliver's master further mentions the lustful nature of the female Yahoos and the tricks by means of which they lure male Yahoos to satisfy their lust. Now this entire description of the Yahoos by a Houyhnhnm is applicable to human beings, although there is some exaggeration in it, as is required by any satire which is to prove effective. Here again we feel compelled to admit the essential truth of Swift's portrayal of mankind, though the element of exaggeration is undeniable.

The excellences of the Houyhnhnms. Finally, the portrayal of the Houyhnhnms further darkens the picture of the human race as painted by Swift. The Houyhnhnms are governed wholly by reason, and their reason is not problematical as is human reason by which men can argue with plausibility on both sides of a question. The reasoning of the Houyhnhnms is perfectly sound, with the result that there are no controversies, wranglings, and disputes among them. Friendship and benevolence are the two principal virtues among the Houyhnhnms. The Houyhnhnms preserve decency and civility in the highest degree. Temperance, industry, exercise, and cleanliness are the lessons which are taught to the young ones of both sexes among the Houyhnhnms. There is no violation of marriage, and there is no other unchastity. They have enough common sense to regulate their members in order to avoid over-population. In short, they are free from all the faults and failings of the human race. Now, this portrayal of the Houyhnhnms may not appeal to us as an ideal because it is clear that the Houyhnhnms are also lacking in certain essential human qualities but this portrayal does make us more keenly aware of the weaknesses, follies, and evils of our own species.

The truth in Swift's portrayal of the human race. Having noted the element of exaggeration in the portrayal of both the humans and the Houyhnhnms, we are yet constrained to remark that Swift's attack on the human race is substantially true to facts. Like Swift himself, we feel inclined to hate mankind collectively but to love particular individuals who win our affection by their goodness, kindness, and honesty. There is a preponderance of evil in human beings who largely ignore the dictates of reason and follow their evil impulses. All that Swift has done is to expose the evil side of man and to stimulate human being to develop their ratio nal faculties.

Q. 4. Examine Swift's use of Lemuel Gulliver as a narrator and an observer.

Or

Explain the role of Lemeul Gulliver in Swift's book ***Gulliver's Travels.***

Or

What is the function of Lemeul Gulliver in ***Gulliver's Travels*** **?**

Ans. Gulliver, a detached and impartial character. Lemuel Gulliver is a fictitious character invented by Swift to serve his satirical purposes in the book *Gulliver's Travels*. The book was not intended as a personal memoir*. Swift's object in writing it was to express his ideas about mankind in general and about England and English political and religious institutions of the time in particular. One method of doing so would have been to write the book in the first person pronoun using 'I'. But that method would have made the book look like an autobiography and we would have been inclined to question the validity of the story which is largely improbable and incredible. The account of the various voyages given by a fictitious character called Gulliver carries a certain plausibility because we feel inclined to look upon Gulliver as a detached and impartial person and we easily fall under his spell.

Gulliver's four-fold role in the book. Gulliver is primarily an observer and a narrator. He has extraordinary powers of observation, and he narrates all that he has observed and experienced in such a skilful manner as to hold our attention throughout. But, in addition to being an observer and a narrator, he is also a commentator and a medium through whom Swift conveys to us his criticism of mankind and his reactions to English institutions and English politicians of his own time. Thus Gulliver has a four-fold role or function in the book.

Gulliver, Swift's mouthpiece, but not to be fully identified with Swift. Nor can it be doubted that at most points in the course of the story Gulliver serves as a mouthpiece or spokesman of Swift. Of course, we are not to identify Gulliver completely with Swift ; the two personalities are to be kept apart. But the fact remains that it is through Gulliver that Swift himself speaks and communicates his views to us. Wherever Gulliver draws any conclusions from his experiences, wherever he offers his comments on what he sees, wherever he moralizes, wherever he characterizes or condemns human beings directly or in a veiled manner, it is Swift himself who is speaking. If Swift had spoken directly to us in his

* memoir : autobiography.

own person, he might not have been able to carry conviction and we might have felt biased against him. At the same time, we should not identify Gulliver with Swift at all stages of the story. In the closing chapters of the book particularly, Gulliver is not Swift and Gulliver's misanthropy is not to be attributed to Swift. Gulliver may there be regarded as an objective, dramatic character, not to be identified with Swift just as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* is not to be identified with Shakespeare.

The general traits of Gulliver's character. Gulliver is the narrator and the principal actor in the book. We look at things through his eyes ; we feel his feelings ; and we share his thoughts. We remain in his company from beginning till end. In the very beginning he gives us many insignificant biographical details in order to produce a realistic effect about his being an authentic person. We find that in all respects he is an average good man. He has received some university education both at Cambridge and at Leyden where he studied medicine. He is a married man with children. He is keenly observant, reasonably intelligent, thoroughly capable in an emergency, brave, and hopeful. He is simple and direct in his narration. He retains his benevolence throughout the first three voyages, though towards the end of the fourth voyage he becomes morbid and almost crazy.

Gulliver as an observer in Lilliput. Gulliver's powers of observation are made manifest to us in his accounts of all the four voyages. For instance, when he finds himself in Lilliput, he observes that the people there are most excellent mathematicians and have arrived to a great perfection in mechanics. He then goes on to describe in detail the method by which he is transported to the metropolis. When he arrives at the royal palace, the Emperor surveys him with great admiration and orders his cooks and butlers to give him food and drink, while the Empress, attended by many ladies, sits at a distance in her chair to watch him. When he is released from his chains, Gulliver goes round the metropolis and gives us a detailed description of the city as well as the palace. He also devotes a whole chapter to a description of the style of living, the laws and customs, the habits and beliefs of the people of this country whom he has closely watched. As the height of the natives here is only six inches, so there is an exact proportion in all other animals as well as plants and trees, Gulliver informs us.

Gulliver as an observer in Brobdingnag and in Laputa. In Brobdingnag Gulliver again observes everything with great care and minuteness. Here again he gives us a detailed description of the country and its metropolis which is called Lorbrulgrud and which stands in almost equal parts on each side of the river that passes through it. The King's palace is no regular edifice, but a heap of buildings about seven miles round. In one striking passage Gulliver gives us his impressions of the beggars whom he sees outside a shop : a woman with a cancer in her breast, a man

with a tumour in his neck, another with a pair of wooden legs, and so on. The people of Laputa are also described in detail: "Their heads were all reclined either to the right or the left; one of their eyes turned inward, and the other directly up to the zenith". The minds of these people are so engaged in intense speculations that they can neither speak nor attend to the talk of others without being roused by some external stimulus. In short, Gulliver gives evidence of his enormous powers of observation throughout the book. Indeed, the book would not have been possible without this capacity for observation.

Gulliver's skill as a narrator. Gulliver also shows a good deal of skill as a narrator. This skill enables him to maintain our interest in the story throughout, and to whet our curiosity again and again. He sometimes arouses our interest by dramatic incidents and sometimes by humorous episodes. Indeed, the first three parts of the book are very amusing and entertaining because of their comic quality. However, even in these three parts there are several dramatic and exciting moments. In Part I, Gulliver wakes up from his sound slumber to find himself in chains. Then there are dramatic and exciting incidents such as the threat of an invasion of Lilliput, Gulliver's seizing the bulk of the enemy fleet, Gulliver's extinguishing a fire in the palace by urinating on it (though this is more of an amusing incident than an exciting one), the threat of an impeachment against Gulliver, and the manner of Gulliver's departure from this country. Among the amusing incidents here are the rope-dancing and the creeping under a string (both of which, of course, have a satirical purpose behind them). In Part II we are greatly excited to learn of the giant size of the inhabitants. It is almost awful to read the account of how a huge woman suckles her child. Gulliver tells us that no object ever disgusted him so much as the sight of her monstrous breast: "It stood prominent six foot, and could not be less than sixteen in circumference. The nipple was about half the bigness of my head." The description of the hugeness of various animals such as cats, dogs, rats, flies, wasps, monkeys and such objects as apples and hailstones, and Gulliver's adventures among them, or with them, are both amusing and frightening. The manner in which Gulliver is tormented by the court dwarf (who is thirty feet high) is also one of the highlights of this part. The there are the maids of honour who play all kinds of games with Gulliver. The handsomest among these maids of honour sometimes puts Gulliver astride upon one of her nipples and plays many other tricks upon him. Part III is rather discursive and lacks the unity of action of the other parts of the book, but even here our interest is maintained. The flying island of Laputa is in itself is a miracle. The experiments which are going on at the Academy of Projectors in Lagado are also very interesting. Part IV contains an exciting and intriguing account of strange creatures like the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. We now find ourselves in a country where the horses can talk and can teach their language to a human being. Gulliver

has many conversations with his equine master* who enlightens Gulliver on the way the Houyhnhnms run their country. In short, *Gulliver's Travels* contains a gripping narrative, and the credit for lending so much interest to the story goes to Gulliver.

Gulliver as a commentator and a moral judge. Gulliver is also a commentator and a moral judge. He is not only a man of action but also one who is endowed with a capacity for thought and reflection. He can ponder over what he sees and he can draw conclusions from his experiences. At one point in Part I, Gulliver reflects thus : "Of so little weight are the greatest services to princes when put into the balance with a refusal to gratify their passions".** In Part II, he thus meditates upon one of the situations : "This made me reflect how vain an attempt it is for a man to endeavour doing himself honour among those who are out of all degree of equality or comparison with him".*** After having witnessed the sad plight of the immortals, in Part III, Gulliver draws the following moral : "They were the most mortifying sight I ever beheld, and the women more horrible than the men. The reader will easily believe that my keen appetite for perpetuity of life was much abated."† In Part IV this is one of his conclusions about the Houyhnhnms and human beings : "But I must freely confess that the many virtues of those excellent quadrupeds, placed in opposite view to human corruptions, had so far opened mine eyes and enlarged my under standing that I began to view the actions and passions of man in a very different light."††

Gulliver, as the medium of satire. Finally, Gulliver is the medium through whom Swift communicates his satirical points and purposes to us. When Gulliver dwells upon the conflict between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians or between the High-Heels and the Low-Heels, we can see that Swift is giving us a satirical account of the conflicts between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, and of the party strife of his time. When Gulliver describes the rope-dancing and the creeping under a string, we know that Swift is here satirizing the sycophancy of the politicians in their efforts to win royal favour. The comments of the King of Brobdingnag upon the presumption of diminutive insects like Gulliver to mimick grandeur is also satirical in intention as is the same King's description of the human race as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth". In the account of the third voyage, we have a satire on people who remain engrossed in their meditations and cogitations to such an extent that they do not have the time even to make love

*equine master : master who is a horse.

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to their wives. There is also a satirical reference here to Wood's half-pence, the coin which was rejected by Ireland as a result of *Drapier's Letters* which were written by Swift. The account of the researches going on at the Academy of Projectors in Lagado is a satire on the kind of useless work which was being done by the Royal Society in those days. In addition to that, we have a satire on the human longing for immortality. In Part IV, the satire on mankind becomes very fierce and takes the form of what is known as "invective". We have here a denunciation of war and the destruction caused by the weapons of war ; and a denunciation of lawyers, judges, doctors, and government ministers. The horses or the Houyhnhnms impress Gulliver so much that he becomes a great admirer of those beings and a hater of his own species. Thus, it is through Gulliver that Swift here conveys to us his misanthropic and cynical view of mankind, though Gulliver's final attitude of a complete abhorrence and detestation of the human race at the end of the book cannot be attributed to Swift himself.

An unfair criticism. According to one critic,* Gulliver by his technique of narration does not create a sense of reality about himself. Gulliver is not a character in the sense in which Tom Jones, for example, is a character, says this critic. Gulliver has the most minimal subjective life and the scantiness of his inner life cannot be doubted. He is, in fact, an abstraction, manipulated in the service of satire. However, this is a view which we cannot accept. Gulliver strikes us as a real, living personality. His inner thoughts and feelings at different stages in the narration have adequately been revealed to us. There was no need for Swift to subject Gulliver to any kind of psycho-analysis.

Q. 5. *Gulliver's Travels* is the most delightful of children's books, yet one of the bitterest satires on mankind. Show the truth of this statement.

Or

Show that *Gulliver's Travels* is more than an adventure story.

Or

***Gulliver's Travels* in its totality is a satirical work in spite of the attractive fiction which clothes it. Comment.**

Ans. A twofold approach to this book necessary. *Gulliver's Travels* has established itself as a classic for young people. Its appeal to young minds is due to the fact that it is, on the surface, an adventure story and a fanciful account of strange and wonderful lands. It is, on a superficial view, a novel of adventure and a tale of wonder. The young mind is greatly attracted by adventures and by fanciful accounts such as we come across in *Arabian Nights' Entertainment*. However, it is not enough to describe this book in these terms. It is much more than an adventure story or a fairy tale. On a closer

*Robert C. Elliott

examination it will be found to be a satire, and a bitter one, on mankind in general and on English politics and politicians of the time in particular. Thus we have to approach this work in two ways : we have to treat it as an adventure story, and we have then to probe it deeper in order to grasp and appreciate its satirical purpose.

Several adventures in the course of Gulliver's voyages. *Gulliver's Travels* tells the story of the various voyages undertaken by a man called Lemuel Gulliver. Every voyage is an adventure in itself. In the course of the first voyage, Gulliver gets ship-wrecked and has to swim to the shore to save his life. On the sea-shore he falls into a sound slumber and, when he wakes up, he finds himself a prisoner in chains. In the course of the second voyage, Gulliver's ship is overtaken by a fierce storm. When, after the storm, the ship casts anchor and a few sailors including Gulliver go to the shore, Gulliver is captured by a giant. In the course of his third voyage, Gulliver's ship is overtaken by pirates. In the course of his fourth voyage, Gulliver is attacked by the members of the crew of his own ship and is bound hand and foot. Thus each time Gulliver goes through certain difficulties and dangers. All such adventures are sure to fascinate young readers who will find the story to be gripping.

Lilliput, a kind of wonder-land. Gulliver's experiences in the various countries which he visits are also such as will hold the young reader's attention. Every land which Gulliver visits is a wonderful land, and Gulliver's experiences everywhere are strange or exciting or amusing. In Lilliput the people are pigmies, hardly six inches in height. The very idea that there are human beings so small is funny. The manner in which several ladders are applied by the Lilliputians to Gulliver's sides so that they may climb up in order to provide food to him is even more amusing. In the metropolis of Lilliput, Gulliver becomes an object of curiosity, and he is given the name "man-mountain". Gulliver helps the King of Lilliput to defeat the forces of the enemy country which is called Blefuscu. The manner in which he cripples the enemy fleet is exciting as well as amusing. Then there is the funny episode of Gulliver's extinguishing a fire in the palace by urinating on it. The customs of the Lilliputians are also a source of great amusement to us.

Brobdingnag another wonderful land. Brobdingnag is another strange and wonderful land. This land is inhabited by monstrous-looking giants who are twelve times the height of Gulliver. Here too Gulliver becomes an object of curiosity for the inhabitants, though for the opposite reason. The animals and the insects in this land are also very huge. For instance, a cat here is three times larger than an ox in England ; a rat here is of the size of a big dog in England ; the flies, the wasps, the monkeys, and the eagles are also proportionately large. So are the apples and the hailstones.

Gulliver meets several mishaps here, and they are all bound to interest the young reader.

Strange and surprising events in Laputa and Lagado. Laputa is yet another wonderful land. Laputa is an island which keeps flying through the air at a height of about two miles from the earth. The manner in which flappers draw the attention of their masters to anything needing their attention is very funny. The mutton, the beef, the pudding, and other eatables are here given geometrical shapes or the shapes of musical instruments. The experiments which are in progress at the Academy of Projectors in Lagado are also very interesting like the schemes which are being developed at the school of political projects. Gulliver's interviews with the ghosts and spirits of the great dead on the island of Glubbdubdrib are also a source of great interest. His experience of the immortal persons is yet another episode of the same kind.

The fanciful elements in the voyage to the land of the Houyhnhnms. Gulliver's last voyage takes him to the land of the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. Here too the element of the marvellous predominates. This is a country in which the horses can talk to one another and can even teach their language to a human being. Gulliver picks up the language of the Houyhnhnms and then has regular conversations with his master who is a horse and with whom Gulliver is able to exchange ideas and information. The Houyhnhnms have a wonderful organization and a perfect system by which they govern themselves. The Houyhnhnms who are governed wholly by reason represent perfection, and by contrast with them the Yahoos are hateful and detestable. The account of the way of life of the Houyhnhnms and the Yahoos is also a part of the fanciful story which Swift tells us in this famous work.

The serious purpose of this book : to vex the world. But, as has already been indicated at the outset, *Gulliver's Travels* is much more than an adventure story. It is a great satiric masterpiece. Swift's object in writing it was to "vex" the world by exposing the evils, follies, and absurdities of human life. A direct and outspoken criticism or condemnation of the follies and faults of human beings is bound to offend the readers. A satire is a veiled and indirect condemnation or indictment of the victims. *Gulliver's Travels* is one of the bitterest and most scathing indictments of the human race in English literature. The whole book is written in a fanciful manner, but beneath the fiction and under the surface there lies a serious purpose. Swift's purpose was not just to divert his readers but to startle and shock them.

Swift's attack on politicians and political institutions in Part I. In Part I of the book Swift largely attacks the political institutions and the politicians of his time. Flimnap, the Treasurer in Lilliput, represents Sir Robert Walpole to whom Swift was bitterly opposed.

Dancing on a tight rope symbolizes Walpole's skill in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues. Creeping under a string represents the sycophancy of the King's favourites. Reldresal represents Lord Carteret who was appointed by Walpole to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. The phrase, "one of the king's cushions", refers to one of King George's mistresses who helped to restore Walpole to favour after his fall in 1717. The search of Gulliver by Lilliputians may have some reference to a committee which was formed by the Whigs to investigate the conduct of the previous government and especially of Oxford and Bolingbroke who were suspected of treasonable relationships with France and the Old Pretender. The three fine silk threads which were awarded as prizes to the winners of various contests refer to the various distinctions which were conferred by the English King on his favourites. Swift's satire becomes very amusing indeed when Gulliver speaks of the conflict between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians who represent the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. Swift is here making fun of hair-splitting theological disputes. The conflict between the High-Heels and Low-Heels is a satirical allusion to the conflict between the English political parties of the time. It is noteworthy that the satire in Part I of the book has particular reference to English politics and politicians of Swift's own time. Nevertheless, the satire has not lost its power to amuse or entertain us.

The bitter satire in Part II. In Part II Swift's satire becomes a little more pungent and bitter. The satire here becomes somewhat corrosive and takes on the character of what is known as "invective". When Gulliver gives to the King of Brobdingnag an account of the political institutions of England, the latter observes that the history of Gulliver's country is only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, and banishments. According to the King, all these are the result of the avarice, hypocrisy, perfidy, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition of the people of Gulliver's country. The King's conclusion is that the bulk of the people of Gulliver's country are the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth. We may be sure that this is exactly what Swift himself thought about his countrymen and about mankind in general also.

The disgust of the Brobdingnagian King at certain other features of English life. But the satire in Part II does not end here. We have some more of it when the King reacts with scorn and disgust to Gulliver's account of the destruction which can be caused by means of gunpowder. The King's view about the hundreds of books which are written in England on the art of government is also significant. In the King's opinion, only common sense, reason and justice, and not books, are needed to run a government.

The attack on unrealistic philosophers, scientists, and academics. The satire in part III is not so bitter as in some of the chapters

of Part II. The satire in Part III is, indeed, light-hearted. Here Swift pokes fun at the people whose sole interests are music and geometry and who are so engrossed in their own meditations and cogitations that they do not even have the leisure to make love to their wives. We are also greatly amused by the useless experiments and researches which are going on at the Academy of Projectors and at the school of political projects in Lagado. The projectors here are busy finding methods to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to convert human excrement into its original food, to build houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, to obtain silk from cobwebs, and so on. All this is meant to be a satire on the work which was being done by the Royal Society in England in those days. Swift is here ridiculing philosophers, scientists, academics, planners, intellectuals, in fact, all people who proceed according to theory and who become useless when it comes to actual practice.

The most corrosive satire in Part IV. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* contains the most scornful, the most incisive, and the most corrosive satire on mankind that we can imagine. Here the Yahoos are intended to represent human beings. Gulliver is astonished and horrified on seeing the physical resemblance between the Yahoos and persons of his own race. By contrast with the Yahoos, the Houyhnhnms or the horses are noble and benevolent animals. The Houyhnhnms are wholly governed by reason, and they lead an orderly life. Indeed, Swift tries to degrade and humiliate the human race when he represents the Houyhnhnms as being superior mentally and morally to the human race. The Yahoos are brutal, unteachable, and mischievous. The Houyhnhnms, on the contrary, are morally so good that there is no word in their language even for lying or falsehood. Apart from paying a tribute to the Houyhnhnms, Swift makes Gulliver launch a direct attack on his countrymen. Gulliver, in his account of his country, dwells upon the exploitation of the poor by the rich, the havoc caused by wars, the mercenary motives behind matrimonial alliances, degrading and shameful methods by which people earn their livelihood, the unscrupulousness of lawyers judges, physicians, and politicians, and so on. The attack here is very fierce indeed.

Q. 6. Do you agree with the view that *Gulliver's Travels* is a neurotic phantasy ?

Or

Consider *Gulliver's Travels* as a fierce, but not convincing, indictment of mankind.

Ans. Not a neurotic phantasy, but a basically realistic work. One of the critical approaches to *Gulliver's Travels* is to regard this book as a neurotic phantasy. The word "phantasy" means a fanciful or unrealistic piece of writing, while the word "neurotic" suggests a mental derangement or disorder. This means that *Gulliver's Travels*

could be the product of a deranged or sick mind. Now, there is no doubt that there are certain morbid elements in this book ; nor is there any doubt that it is a fanciful account of the experiences of a man called Gulliver. But it would not be a correct assessment of this work to regard it as the fanciful product of a disordered mind. On the contrary, it is a brilliant work and it could have been produced only by a man who had closely observed human life and who at the same time had a genius for satirical writing. *Gulliver's Travels* is an allegorical satire. The satire here is not mild but corrosive and fierce. Sometimes the satire is so bitter and denunciatory as to become unconvincing. But basically the satire in this book is a sound impeachment of the human race.

The morbid elements in Parts I and II, suggestive of a neurotic mind. The fanciful and morbid character of the writing here is suggested by the fact that in the first two voyages Gulliver visits lands inhabited by pigmies only six inches high and giants of a huge size respectively. Lilliput is a country of dwarfs, while Brobdingnag is a country of huge, monstrous-looking giants. When an author reduces human beings to the size of pigmies, and treats them as no better than insects, he is giving evidence of a neurotic mind. Similarly when he looks at human beings through a magnifying glass and depicts them as huge creatures who bear no proportion to actual human beings, he is again giving evidence of a sick mind. In Brobdingnag, Gulliver is disgusted to see the monstrous breast of a woman when she is suckling her child. Her breast "stood prominent six foot, and could not be less than sixteen in circumference". The nipples of her breasts were about half the bigness of Gulliver's head and they were covered with pimples and freckles so as to look very nauseating. The sight of a group of beggars in Brobdingnag is equally disgusting to Gulliver. There is a woman with a cancer in her breast which is swollen to a monstrous size ; there is a man with a large tumour in his neck, and another with a couple of wooden legs, each about twenty feet high. But the most hateful sight of all is the lice crawling on their clothes. This sight turns Gulliver's stomach. This is the kind of thing that suggests that the author of this book probably had a neurotic mind.

The bitter criticism of the human race by the Brobdingnagian King. That is not all. The King of Brobdingnag actually says that human grandeur must be a contemptible thing to be mimicked by diminutive insects like Gulliver. Subsequently, the same King observes that the bulk of Gulliver's countrymen must be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.

The portrayal of the Yahoos also suggestive of the author's neurotic mind. The portrayal of the Yahoos in Part IV of the book reinforces the impression that the author had a neurotic mind. The Yahoos are described as filthy, gluttonous beings who arouse Gulliver's hatred and disgust at first sight. The more Gulliver goes

near them, the more detestable they appear to him to be during his stay in that country. Gulliver thinks them to be the most unteachable of all brutes, having the strongest disposition to mischief. They have a stupid desire to collect shining stones, and they have such dirty habits as licking the feet and posteriors of their leader. The female Yahoos are very lustful, and they try to lure the males to secret places in order to have their lust satisfied. Now the Yahoos are intended to suggest the human race, and that is why physically they closely resemble human beings. The conduct of the female Yahoos suggests to Gulliver the lewdness and coquetry of women in general. Gulliver further describes the Yahoos as cunning, malicious, treacherous, and revengeful. Gulliver now actually begins to think his own countrymen and even the members of his own family to be no better than the Yahoos. All this indicates that Swift is expressing his own profound hatred for the human race.

Gulliver's condemnation of his countrymen also suggestive of a neurotic mind. The matter does not end here. Gulliver himself, while giving an account of his countrymen's life to his equine* master, bitterly criticizes lawyers, judges, doctors, and ministers of state. Here we have a sweeping and wholesale indictment of the human race. The lawyers are described by him as persons who are trained in the art of proving by words that white is black and black is white, according as they are paid. Lawyers are "the most despicable in common conversation, avowed enemies to all knowledge and learning, and disposed to pervert the general reason of mankind". Judges are persons who have been selected from amongst the most skilled lawyers who have grown old or lazy and who have been biased all their lives against truth and equity. The judges avoid entering into the merits of the cases but are loud, violent, and tedious in dwelling upon all circumstances which are not to the purpose. Doctors and physicians are generally incompetent pretenders who hardly ever cure any disease, real or imaginary. The chief minister in a country has only one passion which is the desire for wealth, power, and titles. A man may rise to the position of a chief minister by degrading methods such as using his wife, daughter, or sister to gain promotion. The ministers of state are persons who excel in insolence, lying, and bribery. It is an entirely one-sided picture.

The reader's suspicion about the author's diseased mind. Thus the human race is painted in such dark colours that the reader cannot help thinking that the author had probably a diseased mind. So ugly and hateful do human beings now appear to Gulliver, who has lived among the noble race of the Houyhnhnms, that he no longer wishes to return to his own country or even to his family. When Gulliver does return home, he tries to avoid the company of his wife and he feels ashamed of having begotten his children. He spends three or four hours daily in the company of a couple of

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*** equine master : master who is a horse.**

horses which he has specially bought for the purpose. He has become a complete misanthrope.

Political satire with deep roots in actuality. But this is only part of the truth. The criticism of the human race contained in the satire in *Gulliver's Travels* is substantially well-founded and therefore convincing. Much of the criticism is also very humorous and witty. We have plenty of light-hearted and mirthful satire. In the country of the pigmies, for instance, there is a dispute going on between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians and also between those who wear high-heels and those who wear low heels. These disputes obviously suggest the religious conflict that was going on at the time between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants, and the theological quarrels which were rampant in those days, and also between the two political parties. The continuing war between Lilliput and Blefuscu suggests the continuing wars between England and France in Swift's time. The ironic portrayal of Flimnap, the Treasurer in Lilliput, is intended as a mockery of Sir Robert Walpole. The annoyance of the Empress of Lilliput with Gulliver for having extinguished a fire in her palace by urinating on it was intended by Swift to be a satirical representation of the resentment of Queen Anne against him for having written *A Tale of a Tub*. In short, much of the narrative in Part I of the book is a satire on English politics, English politicians, and English monarchs of that period in history to which Swift himself belonged. There is nothing fanciful or neurotic in this satire. Swift is here giving us hard facts under the cloak of fiction. Part I is thus largely a political allegory with deep roots in actuality.

Constructive criticism by the Brobdingnagian King. In Part II of the book we have such wholesome satire as Gulliver's description of the destructive power of gunpowder and his account of the large number of books that are written in England on the art of government. The King of Brobdingnag is struck with horror at Gulliver's description of such terrible engines of destruction as gunpowder. The King is amazed how so impotent and grovelling an insect as Gulliver could entertain such inhuman ideas. Nor can the King understand why there should be any mystery and intrigue at the court of a king. The King also does not understand the need for any treatises to be written on the art of government because, in his opinion, a government can be run on the basis of common sense, justice, and equity. The King is of the opinion that whoever can make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a piece of ground where only one grew before, would be a true patriot and would deserve more from mankind than the whole race of politicians put together. All this is constructive criticism suggesting a perfectly sane and sound mind.

Wholesome satire in Part III. In Part III, again, we have some very wholesome satire. The researches that are going on at the

Academy of Projectors suggest the useless work that was being done by the Royal Society of the time. This part of the satire is evidently a criticism of philosophers, scientists, academics, planners, intellectuals, in fact, all those people who proceed according to theory and become useless when it comes to actual practice. Such experiments as those intended to extract sunbeams out of cucumbers, to reduce human excrement to its original food, to build houses by beginning at the roof and working downwards to the foundation, and to obtain silk from cobwebs are obviously silly. In Part III we also have a satire on the human longing for immortality. The condition of those who have become immortal is depicted as indescribably wretched and miserable. These immortals long for death, but death does not come to them. Then there is some wholesome satire on historians who twist historical facts or manufacture facts. The critics who have been misrepresenting or misinterpreting the works of Homer and Aristotle are also ridiculed.

The invective in Part IV also basically true to facts. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* contains unrestrained invective. It is this portion of the book which gives rise to the suspicion that Swift had a neurotic mind. Human beings here are depicted as Yahoos, while horses are shown to be superior, both mentally and morally, to human beings. But even in this part of the book, we have some sound criticism of war and the destruction which war brings about. The reaction of the master-Houyhnhnm to Gulliver's description of the havoc which is caused by war is understandable. The master-Houyhnhnm is right in thinking that human beings show a complete want of reason when they go to war. Similarly, there is much sense in Gulliver's account of the mercenary motives behind most matrimonial alliances. Even the criticism of lawyers, judges, physicians, and government ministers is not without a solid basis. We all have had experience of such persons, and we cannot claim that our experiences have been happy or pleasant. Who does not know that lawyers and physicians and government ministers are among the most unscrupulous persons in society?

Gulliver himself neurotic at the end of the book. No, *Gulliver's Travels* is not a neurotic phantasy. Anybody who has had a real and prolonged experience of human society will not discard this book as a neurotic phantasy. As we have noted, there is certainly an element of morbidity in this book. Towards the close, Gulliver himself certainly becomes neurotic. But there is no reason to believe that Swift approves of Gulliver's extreme misanthrophy. On the whole, this book is a realistic portrayal of the human race. Exaggeration there certainly is, but no satire can be written without exaggeration just as the art of the cartoonist cannot flourish without exaggeration.

Q. 7. "I have ever hated all nations, professions, and communities but principally I hate and detest that animal called man......Upon this great foundation of misanthropy the whole building of my *Travels* is erected." Inquire into the sincerity of this confession by Swift.

Or

"I do not hate mankind........."

"But principlly I hate and detest that animal called man."

Is it possible to reconcile these contradicatory remarks of Jonathan Swift with reference to *Gulliver's Travels* ?

Or

From your reading of *Gulliver's Travels* what impression have you formed of Swift's attitude towards mankind ? Would you describe him as a misanthrope ?

Ans. Illuminating comments by Swift himself on this book. Some of the most illuminating comments on *Gulliver's Travels* have come from Swift himself. In a letter that he wrote to Alexander Pope with regard to this bock, he makes several points. Firstly, he says that the chief end of all his labours is "to vex the world rather than divert it". Secondly, he declares that he has "ever hated all nations, professions and communities and all his love is toward individuals". Explaining this remark, he says that he hates the tribe of lawyers, physicians, etc. but that he loves particular lawyers and physicians. He goes on to say in this connection that principally he hates and detests that animal called man, although he heartily loves John, Peter, and Thomas. Thirdly, Swift asserts that he does not believe in the definition of man as *animal rationale* and that in his view man is only *rationis capax*. In other words, Swift does not believe that man is a rational animal, though he does believe that man is capable of becoming rational if he makes the necessary effort. Having thus expressed his views, Swift adds that upon this great foundation of misanthropy (though not Timon's manner), the whole building of *Gulliver's Travels* has been erected.

Unreasonable mankind. In another letter to Alexander Pope, Swift writes : "Drown the world ; I am not content with despising it, but I would anger it if I could with safety. I tell you after all that I do not hate mankind ; it is you others who hate them because you would have them reasonable animals and are angry or disappointed because they are not reasonable." This means that he does not look upon men as reasonable beings, and that he does not hate mankind, though he would like to annoy or vex mankind by his condemnation of its unreasonableness.

Swift's purpose in writing "*Gulliver's Travels*" : the nature of his misanthropy. The gist of these statements by Swift is that he is not a complete misanthrope, that he hates mankind collectively but loves particular individuals in all categories and classes of people, that he does not think human beings to be rational though he does think them to be capable of becoming rational, and that his main object in writing *Gulliver's Travels* (and other books) was to shake people out of their complacency and to make them aware

of their own faults and shortcomings. To establish that human beings are not rational thus emerges as one of the leading motives behind Swift's writing of *Gulliver's Travels*. Nor is there any doubt that Swift fully succeeds in exposing the irrationality and other follies and absurdities of human beings in general. Connected with this chief aim, was Swift's desire to expose the shortcomings, follies, and injustices perpetrated by particular individuals such as Robert Walpole, Queen Anne, and others.

Swift's dislike of political and religious strife as expressed in Part I. In accordance with this design, we find Swift exposing, through Gulliver, the stupidity of religious conflicts such as those which existed between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants (and which exist even today). The Big-Endians and the Little-Endians in Lilliput represent the two major divisions of Christianity. Rope-dancing here represents Sir Robert Walpole's skill at parliamentary strategy and political intrigue. Creeping under a string is a satirical allusion to the sycophancy of the political favourites of the King. The coloured ribbons which were the prizes awarded to the winners represent the ribbons of the orders of the Garter, the Thistle, and the Bath. These awards serve the same purpose in the case of candidates for political patronage as carrots serve when they are shown to donkeys. The conflict between High-Heels and Low-Heels represents the conflict between the two political parties, and Swift's disapproval of it. The annoyance of the Empress of Lilliput with Gulliver for extinguishing a fire in her palace is a satirical allusion to Queen Anne's annoyance with Swift for having written *A Tale of a Tub*. All this is part of the political allegory which we find in Part I of *Gulliver's Travels*. It is true that in some cases Swift is here prompted by his personal ill-will against certain individuals, but there is also unselfish satire when, for instance, he describes the civil war waging between those who insist that an egg should be broken at the big end and those who insist that an egg should be broken at the small end.

Swift's ridicule of the absurd customs of the Lilliputians. Then there is satire of a general kind in Part I. For instance, the Lilliputians bury their dead with their heads directly downwards because they hold an opinion that, in eleven thousand moons, the dead will rise again. The people of Lilliput do not recognize that a child has any obligation to his parents for bringing him into the world because, considering the miseries of human life, it is of no benefit to the child that he has been begotten. Thus Swift is here ridiculing the irrational customs and beliefs of the Lilliputians who after all represent human beings reduced to a small scale.

The follies of human beings as exposed in Part II. In Part II, Swift satirizes the ugliness, the coarseness, and the foulness of the human body by making us look at human beings through a magnifying glass. Not only is the description of the beggars disgusting but even the maids of honour at the Royal Court produce a disgusting

effect upon Gulliver, because a very offenive smell comes from their skins. A general criticism of Gulliver's countrymen is made by the King of Brobdingnag when he says that the history of Gulliver's country is only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, and banishments resulting from avarice, hypocrisy, cruelty, hatred, and ambition. The King also declares that to him Gulliver's countrymen seem to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth. The King does not think that the government of a country needs endless discussion and dispute. What the government needs most is common sense, reason, and a sense of fairness. According to the King, whoever can make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a piece of ground where only one grew before, would be doing more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together. Thus the criticism made by the King has a constructive aspect.

A condemnation of the Laputans.* The description of the people of Laputa also reveals the irrationality of these people. The heads of these people are all inclined either to the right or to the left; one of their eyes is turned inward and the other directly up to the zenith. These people are completely engrossed in their own meditations and cogitations. Their interests are limited only to the sciences of music and geometry. They have no peace of mind because all the time they are worried about the disaster that will one day overtake this planet. Gulliver tells us that he had never seen a more clumsy, awkward, and unhandy people, nor so slow and perplexed upon all other subjects (except geometry and music).

A condemnation of unrealistic intellectuals, of historians, and of literary critics. At the Academy of Projectors in Lagado (the capital of Barnibarbi), scientists are busy with silly schemes such as obtaining sunbeams from cucumbers, reducing human excrement to its original food, building houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, and getting silk from cobwebs. These projects expose the irrationality of the intellectuals in undertaking researches which can yield no practical results. The account of the Academy, then, is a satire on projectors, academics, planners, intellectuals, in fact all people who proceed according to theory and are useless when it comes to actual practice. Swift is here largely thinking of the useless work that was being done in his opinion by the Royal Society at that time. In any case, Swift did not subscribe to the worship of science, and the veneration accorded in his time to Newton. Here, of course, Swift is somewhat shortsighted because he did not realize the potentialities of scientific research, however fantastic or unpractical it may appear to be in the beginning.

Condemnation of the longing for immortality. Another proof of the irrationality of man is his desire for immortality. After witness-

*Laputans : people of Laputa.

ing the miserable plight of the immortals (the Struldbrugs) in Luggnagg, Gulliver feels perfectly disillusioned and his keen appetite for perpetuity of a life is much abated. Swift also offers in this part of his book a sharp satire on those historians who twist the facts of history or manufacture the facts, and those literary critics who have misinterpreted in different ways the writings of ancient authors like Homer and Aristotle.

Exposure of human irrationality in Part IV. In Part IV, Swift's exposure of human unreason becomes extremely cruel. The satire in this part takes the form of denunciation and invective. Human beings are here degraded by being represented as Yahoos who are described as unteachable brutes, cunning, gluttonous, and disposed to great mischief. By comparison with them, the horses are noble animals who are governed wholly by reason, and whose chief virtues are benevolence and kindness. The Houyhnhnms are free from lust and greed. They know how to regulate their population, and they do not have any fear of death. Their whole administration is based on the principle of co-operation rather than competition. Apart from this, the contrast between the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms makes us develop an aversion to the Yahoos, Gulliver himself indulges in a large-scale and sweeping condemnation of his countrymen or the human race. There is no doubt that Swift himself is speaking through Gulliver when Gulliver launches an attack upon lawyers, judges, physicians, and ministers of state; and this fierce attack fully proves Swift's assertion that he hated nations, communities, and professions. Gulliver also here informs his equine* master that the rich in his country live upon the labour of the poor. This economic exploitation is another proof of the irrationality of man. Gulliver's analysis of the causes of war between nations and his description of the destruction caused by war also show human irrationality. Sometimes a war is started because the enemy is too strong and sometimes because the enemy is too weak. Sometimes our neighbours want the things which we have, or have the things which we want; poor nations are hungry, and rich nations are proud. The ravages of war are terrible: ships sunk with a thousand men, twenty thousand killed on each side; dying groans; limbs flying in the air; smoke, noise, confusion; flight, pursuit, victory; fields covered with dead bodies left as food for dogs, wolves, and birds of prey. Rightly does Gulliver's equine master say that, instead of reason, human beings are possessed of some quality fitted to increase their natural vices.

Swift, not an absolute misanthrope. In view of this detailed exposure of human irrationality, folly, and propensity to vice, it would seem that Swift is a cynic and a misanthrope. There is no doubt at all that his opinion of mankind is very low. That does not, however, necessarily mean that he hates the human race.

*equine master : the master who is a horse.

When Gulliver refuses to return to his own country or even to join his family, he is not to be identified with Swift. Indeed, in the concluding two or three chapters Swift completely parts company with Gulliver. It is Gulliver who becomes a hater of the human race, and even of the members of his own family. Swift does not share this extreme misanthropy. In fact, we may even say that Swift is here mocking at the development that has taken place in Gulliver. Nor should we forget that Swift had a number of friends to whom he was genuinely attached. Among the women there was at least one, namely Stella, for whom he had a profound affection. He was therefore justified in saying in his letter to Pope that, though he hated communities and professions, he loved particular individuals.

Q. 8. Characterize *Gulliver's Travels* as a satire. to reform.

Or

"It is a great satiric masterpiece." Is *Gulliver's Travels* adequately described in these terms ? Elaborate your argument.

- It is not criticism for the sake of critici

Or

From your study of *Gulliver's Travels*, write a critical note on Swift as a satirist.

But its purpose is to reform the people.

Or

Bring out Swift's satirical methods and techniques as revealed in *Gulliver's Travels*.

Satirist is a humanitarian.

Ans. A satirical work in the guise of a travel-book. *Gulliver's Travels* is a great satirical work in the form of a travel-book. Swift adopted the form of a travelogue because travel-books had been very popular for a long time in those days, and Swift thought that the vogue and popularity of this kind of writing would attract people to his *Gulliver's Travels* in which the protagonist makes several long voyages and visits several new countries. Swift's real purpose, however, in writing this book was to lash mankind for its follies, absurdities, and evil ways.

Swift, a versatile satirist. A satire may roughly and briefly be defined as a humorous or witty exposure. A satire is a means by which the author can expose the reality of individuals, communities, or all mankind by employing irony, mockery, ridicule, sarcasm, and even invective as the weapons of attack. Swift shows himself to be an adept in the art of wielding all these weapons. He is, indeed, a versatile satirist though his principal weapons are irony (including double irony) and invective. He is a master not only of what is called corrosive satire but also of comic satire. While comic satire is amusing and makes us laugh, corrosive satire is serious and scornful and hardly provides any mirth. *Gulliver's Travels* contains both these kinds of satire, and shows the use of all the devices of a satirist.

"I have never hated mankind, communities have loved them. I detest the animal in man."

Swift's moral purpose in this satire. All satire aims at reform. In writing *Gulliver's Travels*, Swift had aimed at amending and correcting his public though he was doubtful whether he would succeed. (In the "Letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson", Gulliver deplores the fact that the account of his travels has brought about no change in the manners or behaviour or mentality of the people around him and that things are very much the same as they were before the publication of this book.) In his letter to his friend Alexander Pope, Swift had written that the chief purpose which had prompted him to write this work was "to vex the world rather than divert it". What he meant was that he wanted to shock the people into a realization of their faults and failings. In the same letter, Swift expressed the view that man was not a "rational animal" though man was certainly "capable of becoming rational". Thus Swift's object in writing *Gulliver's Travels* was to make people realize their irrationality and to encourage them to develop their rational faculty and to be guided by it. In other words, Swift had a moral or ethical aim in writing this book.

An allegorical satire. *Gulliver's Travels* is an allegorical satire. This means that Swift does not attack personalities and institutions directly but in a veiled manner. For instance, in Part I the portrayal of Flimnap, the Treasurer in Lilliput, is a satirical sketch of Sir Robert Walpole who was the prime minister of England from 1715 to 1716 and then again from 1721 to 1742. Dancing on a tight rope here symbolizes Walpole's skill in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues. Similarly, Reldresal represents Lord Carteret who was appointed by Walpole to the office of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. Again, the phrase, "one of the King's cushions", refers to one of King George's mistresses who helped to restore Walpole to favour after his fall in 1717. The conflict between the High-Heels and the Low-Heels symbolizes the conflict between the two major political parties in England at that time. The dispute between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians symbolizes the quarrels between the Roman Catholics and the Protestants. The reaction of the Empress of Lilliput to Gulliver's extinguishing a fire in her apartment is a satirical way of describing Queen Anne's annoyance with Swift for having written *A Tale of a Tub* in which Swift had attacked religious abuses but which had been misinterpreted by the Queen as an attack on religion itself. The pigmies of Lilliput and the giants of Brobdingnag symbolize human beings, first reduced to a small scale, as if seen through the wrong end of a telescope, and then enlarged to a huge scale as if seen through a magnifying glass. In Part IV, Swift gives us animalsymbolism. Here the Yahoos represent human beings with all their good qualities completely left out, while the Houyhnhnms represent human beings with their good qualities carried to perfection and their bad qualities completely eliminated.

The scope of Swift's satire in "Gulliver's Travels". Part I of *Gulliver's Travels* is largely a satire on English politics, English politicians, English monarchs, and the theological disputes which

prevailed in England in Swift's time. The satire here is thus largely personal (because Swift had a personal grudge against certain politicians like Walpole, and also against Queen Anne for not having granted him a bishopric which he had expected from her), and partly general in so far as it attacks large groups of people, in fact all Swift's countrymen. In Part II, the satire is largely general because it covers Swift's entire country and his countrymen. When Gulliver has given an account of the people, the institutions, and the history of his country to the King of Brobdingnag, the King makes a general comment of a critical and condemnatory nature on all the natives of England. In Part III, Swift satirizes a special class of people, namely the philosophers, scientists, academics, planners, intellectuals, in fact all those people who have a theoretical approach to life and who become useless when it comes to actual practice. The Academy of Projectors in Lagado is a parody of the Royal Society as it was functioning in Swift's time. However, we have some general satire here also when Gulliver witnesses the miserable plight of the Struldbrugs, a group of people who had attained immortality. Here we have a criticism of the human longing for an everlasting life. Besides the theoreticians, historians and critics are also satirized in this part of the book when Gulliver interviews some of the famous dead and learns how historians and critics have been distorting or manufacturing historical facts and how the critics have been misinterpreting and misrepresenting authors like Homer and Aristotle. In Part IV, the satire becomes universal. The target of attack in Part IV is all mankind. In the first three parts of the book, Swift had largely confined his attention to England and to the Europeans countries, but now he widens the scope of his satire to cover all mankind. The Yahoos represent not only Englishmen or Europeans in general, but all human beings. The evils which the master Houyhnhnm has discovered in Yahoos are to be found in human beings all over the world. The master Houyhnhnm accuses the Yahoos of being brutal, beastly, cunning, lustful, lewd, gluttonous, and having the strongest possible disposition to mischief. Similarly, when Gulliver himself gives to his equine* master an analysis of war and describes the havoc wrought by wars, the whole account has a universal validity. Again, Gulliver's condemnation of lawyers, judges, physicians, and government ministers also goes beyond all national barriers, because persons belonging to these professions are all largely unscrupulous everywhere in the world. The glorification of the Houyhnhnms is an idealization of most human virtues, especially of human reason and the human qualities of benevolence and friendship. By contrast with this perfection of human virtues, the vicious nature of human beings acquires a further emphasis, and the satire becomes more pointed and sharp. Thus the scope of Swift's satire is very wide.

Comic satire and corrosive satire. The account of Gulliver's first

*equine master : master who is a horse.

and second voyages (the voyage to Lilliput and Brobdingnag), contains abundant comic satire. The passages dealing with the High-Heels and the Low-Heels and with the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians are truly comic. We are greatly amused to find that some people in Lilliput insist on breaking the eggs at the big end and that others insist on breaking them at the small end. Similarly there is a comic passage in which Gulliver defends the reputation of the Lilliputian lady whose name had been scandalously linked with his own. In Part II, we have a large number of comic episodes in which we witness animals and insects of huge sizes. These animals and insects include cats, dogs, monkeys, flies, and wasps. Even the apples and hailstones here are of a very large size. The behaviour of the maids of honour in Brobdingnag towards Gulliver is also extremely amusing. In Part III almost all the satire is of the comic variety. We laugh heartily at such projects as extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers, converting human excrement into its original food, building houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, obtaining silk from cobwebs, producing books by the use of a machine and without having to use one's brain. Part IV is almost devoid of the comic element, and is very serious and almost sombre and grim. In Part IV we mostly have corrosive, fierce, and offensive satire. The evil side of human nature has greatly been exaggerated in the portrayal of the Yahoos. Gulliver's condemnation of various classes of people is also one-sided and extremely severe. The passage in which Gulliver describes the various activities of people in his country is a glaring example of the severity of Swift's satire. Gulliver here says that some people in his country are undone by law-suits ; others spend all their money in drinking, whoring, and gambling ; others are guilty of treason, murder, theft, poisoning, robbery, perjury, forgery, rape, sodomy ; and so on.

The invective based on hard facts. Indeed, the satire in Part IV is so scornful, incisive, and devastating that some people find it to be unconvincing. In this connection it may be pointed out that basically the condemnation of mankind is true to facts, though there is certainly an element of exaggeration in it. Exaggeration is absolutely essential to satire. Without exaggeration, the satirist cannot create the impression which he seeks to create on the minds of his readers. But any realistic person will agree that there is more of evil in human nature than of good. In other words, we can confidently say that the invective in Part IV is based on hard facts. It is no use pretending that there is more of goodness in human beings than of evil. We have only to look at the behaviour, in our own country, of politicians, lawyers, physicians, bureaucrats, college and school teachers, government officials (how and low), contractors, industrialists, manufacturers, shopkeepers, business-men, and so on.

The charge of misanthropy against Swift. A charge often brought against Swift as a satirist is that he was a misanthrope or

a hater of mankind. This charge gains weight in the light of Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels*. Now, Swift himself admitted in the letter to Alexander Pope (already referred to above) that he hated all nations, professions, and communities, and that all his love was towards individuals. This means that Swift does not rule out exceptions to his view of human nature as low, mean, and largely evil. There are certainly individuals who possess excellent qualities of head and heart, but their number is very small. Swift also admits that the whole building of his *Gulliver's Travels* is erected on the great foundation of misanthropy, though not in Timon's manner.

A satire on pride. In addition to the issues which have been mentioned above, we have in *Gulliver's Travels* the more general themes of moral satire. These are man's pettiness and greed, his pride, the infinite perversions of reason, and lust. There is an amusing summary of these themes in the "Letter from Captain Gulliver to his Cousin Sympson". It is noteworthy that towards the close of the book, Gulliver especially singles out "pride" as the greatest defect of human beings. Another noteworthy point in connection with *Gulliver's Travels* is that in the concluding two or three chapters, when Gulliver has become an absolute and uncompromising hater of mankind and even of the members of his own family, Swift is not to be identified with him. Here Swift seems to be pointing out to us the dangers of extreme misanthropy. Gulliver's attitude of complete isolation from mankind and his aversion to the members of his own family were certainly not approved by Swift, because Swift was not a misanthrope of the extremest kind.

Q. 9. Do you agree with the view that the first three parts of the book underline Gulliver's human frailty while the voyage to Houyhnhnms shows his regeneration ? Give a reasoned answer.

Or

Trace the development of Gulliver's outlook and mentality in the course of his voyages. Would you regard it as a healthy and welcome development ?

Ans. From optimism to pessimism and cynicism. In the beginning of the book we find Gulliver to be a normal, cheerful kind of man with an optimistic outlook upon life and an adventurous spirit. No man can voluntarily undertake dangerous voyages without having an optimistic attitude towards life. At the end of the book we find that Gulliver has become pessimistic, cynical, and averse to the company of his fellow human beings and even the members of his own family. Such a development cannot be described as regeneration or a healthy and welcome development. But let us first examine the circumstances which serve as a basis for the view that the first three voyages underline Gulliver's human frailty while the voyage to the Houyhnhnms shows his regeneration.

Gulliver, a champion or apologist of the human race in the first three voyages. During the first three voyages Gulliver remains more

or less a champion or at least an apologist of the human race, while the fourth voyage makes him fully aware of the irrationality and follies of mankind. Gulliver's unawareness or only a partial awareness or only a fragmentary realization of the follies and absurdities of mankind in the first three voyages may be interpreted as showing his human frailty, while his full and complete realization of the unreason and brutishness of human beings in the fourth voyage shows his awakening to the true facts, and may therefore be regarded as a regeneration and a welcome development. In the first three voyages, Gulliver continues to identify himself with the human species, but during his stay with the Houyhnhnms in the fourth part of the book he tries to disown his relationship with mankind and to cut himself off from the company of his fellows.

Gulliver's attitude and mentality in Lilliput. This does not mean that in Lilliput or in other countries visited by him during his first three voyages, Gulliver is totally blind to human weaknesses. In Lilliput for instance, he can perceive the absurdities of the inhabitants of this land. He is greatly amused to witness the diversions of the court. The display of rope-dancing and of creeping under a stick are the principal diversions at the royal Court, and Gulliver describes these with great relish. Then there are the conflicts between the two factions represented by High-Heels and Low-Heels respectively, and there are also the conflicts between the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians. Of course, Gulliver is greatly amused by these conflicts also, especially the latter coflict in which one party insists that eggs should be broken at the big end while the other party demands that eggs should always be broken at the small end. Gulliver also here participates in the war between Lilliput and Blefescu. The laws and customs of the Lilliputians are described by Gulliver in detail, and these customs including the Lilliputian style of writing are absurd. The scandal which links Gulliver with one of the ladies at the Court is also most absurd and amusing. Gulliver also reflects upon the ingratitude of the Lilliputians King towards him. In short, Gulliver becomes aware of a number of faults and follies of the people here, but he remains tolerant, almost indulgent towards these people. He does not contemplate any violent step when he is threatened with impeachment which could lead to his being sentenced to death or at least to his being blinded as a punishment. Nor does he at any point suggest that the absurdities of the Lilliputians are a reflection of the absurdities of the human race. Swift is of course portraying the human race or specimens of the human race through these diminutives, and we too understand Swift's meaning and purpose, but Gulliver does not connect the weaknesses and shortcomings of these pigmies with the human race to which he himself belongs. This whole attitude of Gulliver may thus be taken to indicate his human frailty.

Gulliver's attitude to the human race in Part II of the book. In Part II of the book, Gulliver feels greatly disgusted with the physical

coarseness and foul smells of the Brobdingnagians. But he does not realize that these people are only a magnified image of the members of the human species. When he looks at the woman with her huge breast suckling her child, the sight is awful to him. Similarly, the sight of the beggars suffering from various terrible diseases is shocking to him. The tricks and the mischief which the maids of honour play upon him, and the offensive smell which comes from their skins, are also abhorrent to him. But he does not say that these sights and smells are very much the same as would have been experienced in any European city though in a different form and on a reduced scale. On the contrary, Gulliver is in this part of the book a defender of the human race. He talks to the King here of his own beloved country (namely England), his country's trade, the conflicts in religion, the political parties, the wars by sea ad land. Gulliver feels almost proud to talk of these matters. It is the King who deflates Gulliver by remarking "how contemptible a thing was human grandeur which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as Gulliver". Gulliver feels much offended with this remark of the King. Gulliver's colour comes and goes several times with indignation to hear such adverse comments on "his noble country, the mistress of arts and arms, the scourge of France, the arbitress of Europe, the seat of virtue, piety, honour, and truth, and the pride and envy of the world". Now here again we understand Swift's purpose : Swift is obviously ironical in writing all this. But Gulliver feels really vain about his country and its achievements. Sometimes later when Gulliver describes the political set-up of his country and the functioning of the courts of justice, the King remarks that the history of Gulliver's country is only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, revolutions, and banishments. The King finally says that the bulk of Gulliver's countrymen must be "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth". On hearing this Gulliver remains silent. The fact that he does not join the King in this condemnation shows that he is still on the side of the human race. This attitude is again indicative of his continuing human frailty.

Gulliver's attitude in Laputa and in Lagado. In Part III of the book, Gulliver gives us an account of the people of the flying island, Laputa. These people too have their absurdities and shortcomings. Their preoccupation with music and geometry, to the exclusion of all other branches of learning, is of such an extreme kind that they give to their dishes on the dinner-table either geometrical shapes or the shapes of musical instruments. These people remain so engrossed in their meditations that their attention to other matters outside their minds has to be drawn by means of some external action. The men here have no leisure even to make love to their wives. Another feature of their thinking is their obsessive fear because they believe that a great cosmic disaster will soon overtake this planet and destroy it. Gulliver's description of the researches

going on at the grand Academy of Lagado also occurs in this part of the book. The projectors here are busy with such projects as extracting sunbeams out of cucumbers, reducing human excrements to its original food, building houses from the roof downwards to the foundation, and obtaining silk from cobwebs. Here again we understand that Swift is writing a satirical account of the researches which were being made by the Royal Society in those days, but Gulliver speaks as if he were merely giving us a literal account of whatever he has witnessed. This attitude again may be attributed to his human frailty.

The development or progress of Gulliver's mind in Part III. However, there is one noteworthy development in Part III. When Gulliver describes his interviews with some of the distinguished men who died a long ago and whose spirits have been recalled by the Governor of Glubbdubdrib, he realizes that the historical accounts of certain happenings which he had gone through in his country are after all not correct and that the historians in his country have distorted such facts as the manner of Alexander's death and Hannibal's crossing the Alps. Gulliver also discovers that the interpretations of the writings of Homer and Aristotle given by critics are not strictly in keeping with the ideas of the authors themselves. Again, when Gulliver has witnessed the miserable plight of a group of immortal persons called the Struldbrugs, he fully realizes the folly of the human longing for immortality. In this connection Gulliver says that his "keen appetite for perpetuity of life was much abated" and he became greatly ashamed of the pleasing visions which he had formed at the thought of immortality. In these particular cases, then, we find Gulliver becoming keenly aware of the dishonesty of the the people of his race and of certain foolish notions which they entertain. Gulliver is now no longer one with the human race. He has taken a stride forward. His mind has been enlarged by experience, and he has become capable of a critical examination of things.

Gulliver's supposed regeneration in Part IV. In Part IV, there is a further development, and it is this development which is regarded as his regeneration. Gulliver now becomes a conscious critic and censor of the human race. He in his own person denounces human beings. While informing his equine* master of the kind of life which people in his native country lead, he says that the rich people there live on the labour of the poor, that most people earn their livelihood by all kinds of misdeeds and crimes, that destructive wars often take place between nations, that lawyers are a community of people adept in proving black to be white and white to be black, that physicians pretend to cure diseases which they actually cannot cure, that judges never go into the merits of the cases which they are called upon to decide, that the chief ministers in various countries rise to their positions by all kinds

* equine master : master who is a horse.

of wicked methods, and so on. Gulliver is also shocked to find that the Yahoos in this country bear a close physical resemblance to human beings and that these Yahoos in their conduct and behaviour are not only crude and uncivilized but beastly, brutal, cunning, lustful and lewd, and have the strongest disposition to mischief. Gulliver's observation of the ways of the Yahoos only confirms and reinforces his low opinion of the human race and he begins to identify, in his mind, all human beings with Yahoos. And Gulliver is wonderstruck to see how the Houyhnhnms are wholly governed by reason and how well organized their society is. In short, Gulliver now becomes fully aware of the ugliness and repulsiveness of the life of human beings, and he can see that there is a different way of life possible, a way which has been achieved by the Houyhnhnms or the horses. Far from taking the side of human beings, Gulliver here condemns the human race without finding any extenuating circumstances. His exhilarating experience of the Houyhnhnms leads to his becoming a complete hater of mankind.

Gulliver's total misanthropy at the end not a sign of regeneration. The matter does not, however, end here. If the matter had really ended here, we could probably have accepted the view that this development shows Gulliver's regeneration and is therefore welcome to us. This kind of misanthropy is necessary if we aim at reforming or improving the state of affairs in human society. But Gulliver's misanthropy goes further and touches the extremest limits imaginable. Gulliver has now lost the desire to return to his country. He has begun to detest the human race altogether, and would not like to live among his fellow human beings any more. Not only that ; he does not wish even to be reunited with the members of his own family. It is under the pressure of Don Pedro, the Captain of the ship, that Gulliver does return to his own country. He is received by his wife and children with great joy, but the sight of them fills him with only hatred, disgust, and contempt. He is in fact overcome by a feeling of shame and horror that he had copulated with a female member of the human species and begotten children of that species. Even after a lapse of five years since his return to England, Gulliver is unable to overcome his aversion to the members of his family. He feels more satisfaction in conversing with a couple of horses which he has bought than in the company of his fellow human beings. Now it is this final attitude of Gulliver which is open to serious objection. Such an attitude can by no means be described as regeneration. This is an attitude of unrelieved pessimism and total despair. This kind of misanthropy can only lead to one's committing suicide. In the opinion of some commentators, Gulliver has gone mad and is therefore not to be taken seriously.

Q. 10. "*Gulliver's Travels* is, in a sense, a tragic work, as near a tragic work as the age ever got." Discuss.

Or

Would you say that *Gulliver's Travels* is a tragic work ? If so, why ?

Ans. A tragi-comedy. *Gulliver's Travels* is undoubtedly a satire. It is a satire on English politics, English politicians, and religious disputes in England of the time of Swift. More than that, it is a satire on mankind in general. Now, a satire, by its very definition, has a certain comic quality because it exposes the follies, absurdities, and faults of human beings in a humorous and witty manner. But *Gulliver's Travels* is not just a comic book ; its serious and sombre message has a tragic quality. There is certainly much comedy in the book, and we laugh a good deal, especially in the first three parts of it, but it also puts us in a serious mood, and Part IV is surely the most melancholy piece of writing conceivable. However, we cannot describe *Gulliver's Travels* as a wholly tragic work, though it would be quite appropriate to call it a tragi-comedy.

A pessimistic book. In a letter which Swift wrote to his friend Alexander Pope, he said that the purpose of all his labours was "to vex the world rather than divert it". Now, satire aims at making the readers laugh at the follies and faults of human beings. Swift, on the contrary, declared that his purpose was to vex the readers. More than that, he said that the whole building of his book was erected on the foundation of misanthropy. Misanthropy is a serious matter, not just a matter for laughter, because misanthropy means a hatred of the world and of mankind. Swift shows himself to be, on the whole, a hater of mankind and the world in this book ; and that is a depressing fact, In the letter referred to above, Swift strikes a pessimistic note, and the book itself is undoubtedly pessimistic except from the point of view of children for whom the book is just an adventure story and a tale of wonderful lands.

Sadness beneath the comedy in Part I. Gulliver's account of his voyage to Lilliput and his stay in that country is certainly very funny. The very idea, that the inhabitants of that country are pigmies hardly six inches in height, is amusing. The diversions of the Lilliputians court such as rope-dancing and creeping under a stick are very amusing. The conflict between those who insist on breaking the eggs at the big end and those who insist on breaking the eggs at the small end is also very funny. So are the conflicts between the high-heels and the low-heels. But basically the whole account is a sad one. We cannot help reflecting that the life of the Lilliputians is by no means a happy one. In the first place, we recognize the Lilliputians to be human beings reduced to a small scale. The Lilliputians are ourselves. Secondly, the Big-Endians and the Little-Endians only represent religious conflicts which are continuing till today. The high-heels and the low-heels symbolize the two major political parties in England of that time, and similar political parties exist today also, though under different names, and

they exist in all countries. The continuing war between Lilliput and Blefuscu represents the continuing war in those times between England and France, but wars have not ended even today. In fact, bigger wars have taken place since then. Any war is tragic, and the description of the war between Lilliput and Blefuscu, though comic on the surface, is tragic in its deeper import. Likewise, the ingratitude of the King of Lilliput towards Gulliver is a deplorable matter. The absurd customs of Lilliput, such as their view of children, have also a depressing effect on us. Even the diversions mentioned above, though they make us laugh, are basically saddening in their effect on us because they represent the vicious and low elements in human nature. When we recall the shamelessly corrupt methods of Sir Robert Walpole and other politicians as indirectly conveyed to us by Swift, we feel all the more depressed to think that people in high places can be devoid of a conscience. In short, the account of Gulliver's voyage to Lilliput produces a feeling of deep gloom in us even when we are laughing. In other words, there is sadness beneath the comedy of the whole account.

The depressing effect of Part II in spite of its comic episodes. The same is true of the account of Gulliver's voyage to Brobdingnag. Undoubtedly there are several amusing episodes in this part of the book also. Gulliver's misadventures with a cat, a couple of rats, a monkey, and an eagle are funny indeed, as are the incidents of Gulliver being knocked down by the huge apples and hailstones. The tricks played upon Gulliver by the court dwarf and by the royal maids of honour are also comic. But there are several elements in this part of the book which depress and sadden us. There is, first of all, the coarseness and ugliness of the human body as seen in the description of the female breast and the crowd of beggars. Gulliver tells us that no object had ever disgusted him so much as the sight of the monstrous breast of the woman whom he saw suckling her child. The sight of the beggars has also a nauseating effect on Gulliver just as the description of that sight has on us. There is among the beggars a woman with a cancer in her breast ; there is a man with a large tumour in his neck ; there is a fellow having wooden legs about twenty feet high ; but the most hateful sight is that of the lice crawling on their clothes. Still more depressing are the comments of the Brobdingnagian King on hearing from Gulliver the history of Gulliver's country. According to the King, the history of England is only a heap of conspiracies, rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, and banishments resulting from the avarice, hypocrisy, perfidy, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition of the people. The King further remarks that, in his opinion, the bulk of Gulliver's countrymen are "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth". This is a sad commentary, indeed ; and it is a commentary applicable not only to Gulliver's countrymen but to the whole race of human beings. This is a commentary which has tragic implications. Gulliver himself contributes to the

tragic effect when he points out in this part of the book that the whole race of mankind has been subjected to a disease which is that the nobles have often fought for power, the people have often fought for liberty, and the rulers have often struggled for absolute control of their countries.

A couple of tragic elements even in Part III. Part III of *Gulliver's Travels* is, on the whole, pure comedy. We have light-hearted satire here on the Royal Society and on those theoretical philosophers and scientists who are blind to the realities of life. But even in this part of the book we perceive certain tragic elements. The people of Laputa, for instance, are so engrossed in their meditations and cogitations that they are unaware of what is going on around them. The men in this country have no time even to make love to their wives who therefore turn to the visiting aliens. The story of the woman who leaves her husband and goes down to the continent of Balnibarbi to live with an ordinary footman is melancholy in its implications no matter how much we may laugh at the comic side of the affair. We surely laugh at the prime minister whose wife deserts him, but at bottom this is a pathetic case. A much more pathetic case is that of the Struldbrugs, or the immortals who are in a most wretched and miserable condition because death does not come to them. There is nothing in the portrayal of these immortals to amuse us. The portrayal of these people is almost heart-breaking.

The saddening portrayal of the Yahoos in Part IV. Part IV of *Gulliver's Travels* is wholly tragic. The satire in this part of the book is not comic but corrosive, fierce, and offensive. The portrayal of the Houyhnhnms is certainly uplifting, but the portrayal of the Yahoos is extremely depressing and saddening. The Yahoos symbolizes human beings ; and they are described as the most unteachable of all the brutes. The Yahoos are cunning, beastly, lustful and lewd, gluttonous, with the strongest disposition to mischief. Indeed, the Yahoos have no redeeming feature at all.

The tragic implications of Gulliver's description of war and of certain classes of people. Even more saddening than the account of the Yahoos is Gulliver's description of war and of the kind of life that his countrymen lead. Gulliver's condemnation of lawyers, judges, physicians, and government ministers is very severe, and shows an extreme disgust with all these classes of people. Some readers may remain unconvinced by this sweeping criticism, but there can be no doubt of the tragic implications of this description.

Gulliver's final misanthropic outlook on life. Gulliver's final outlook upon life as expressed in the concluding two or three chapters deepens our sense of tragedy. Gulliver returns home most reluctantly. His reunion with his family, instead of pleasing and delighting him, has a most saddening effect on him. Having lived among the noble Houyhnhnms, he finds it impossible to reconcile

himself to the members of the human race, and even to his wife and childern. The very odour of human beings has a disgusting effect on him. And he discovers one more characteristic of human beings which aggravates his hatred of human beings, and that is pride. Gulliver has become a thorough misanthrope.

Mankind, painted in very dark colours. There are certain passages in the book, mainly in Part IV, which greatly add to the tragic effect of the book and which extinguish our laughter. There is a passage in which Gulliver describes that some of his countrymen ruin themselves by litigation ; some spend all their money in drinking, whoring, and gambling ; many are guilty of murder, theft, robbery, perjury, forgery, rape, sodomy, etc. The passage describing a scene of battle is also of this kind : ships sunk with a thousand men ; twenty thousand killed on each side ; dying groans ; limbs flying in the air ; trampling to death under horses' feet ; plundering, stripping, ravishing, burning, and destroying. Then there is a passage which describes that vast numbers of people in England and in European countries earn their livelihood by begging, robbing, stealing, cheating, pimping, forging, gambling, lying, poisoning, whoring, and so on. When Gulliver is living with the Houyhnhnms, he is happy that the usual causes of irritation and annoyance are not to be found here. There is neither a physician to destroy his body nor a lawyer to ruin his fortune ; no informer to watch his actions ; no backbiters, pickpockets, housebreakers, bawds, buffoons, politicians, tedious talkers, ravishers, murderers ; no leaders or followers of party and faction ; no fops, bullies, drunkards, strolling whores ; no scoundrels ; etc. etc. This is a lengthy catalogue of the evils which afflict human society in general but from which the society of the Houyhnhnms is totally exempt. Thus mankind is painted in very dark colours, and we feel almost stunned by this bitter portrayal.

A depressing book. At a deeper level, *Gulliver's Travels* is, indeed, a tragic work. But it is not tragic in any commendable sense. It does not elevate or inspire or uplift us as a tragic work should. It does not bring about any catharsis of the undesirable feelings in us. It does not show human beings as glorious. On the contrary, it shows them as fools and knaves. It offers us a gloomy and depressing picture of mankind.

Q. 11. Write brief critical notes on the following characters, indicating their functions in *Gulliver's Travels* :

(*a*) The Emperor of Lilliput
(*b*) The King of Brobdingnag
(*c*) Don Pedro de Mendez.

Ans. (a) The Emperor of Lilliput

Physical description. The Emperor of Lilliput is described by Gulliver as being taller than his subjects by the breadth of Gulliver's nail. The Emperor's features are strong and masculine with an

Austrian lip and arched nose, his countenance erect, his body and limbs well proportioned, all his motions graceful, and his deportment majestic. The Emperor was at that time past his prime, being twentyeight years and three quarters old, of which he had reigned about seven, in great joy, and generally victorious.

The Emperor's diversions. The Emperor feels very inquisitive about Gulliver as soon as he sees this giant in his country. At first there is a great difficulty in communication between the two because neither knows the language of the other ; but Gulliver picks up the local language in due course, and then Gulliver becomes almost a favourite of the Emperor whom he regards as "a most magnanimous prince". The Emperor holds contests to select candidates for high appointments at his court. These c ontests serve also as diversions for him and for the courtiers. One contest requires candidates to exhibit their skill in rope-dancing. Another contest requires candidates to creep under a stick held by the Em peror in his hands. Whoever performs his part in this contest with the greatest agility, is rewarded with one of the three silken threads of blue, red, and green colours.

The Emperor's eventual displeasure with Gulliver. The Emperor feels very pleased when Gulliver cripples the fleet of Blefuscu, the country with which Lilliput has been at war almost constantly, and confers on Gulliver the highest title of honour existing in Lilliput. But soon afterwards the Emperor feels annoyed with Gulliver because the latter refuses to go the whole hog and destroy all the ships of Blefuscu. The Emperor's displeasure with Gulliver now encourages Gulliver's enemies to hatch a conspiracy against Gulliver as a result of which the Emperor agrees to impeach Gulliver and sentence him to death or at least to have him blinded as a punishment for treason. It is lucky, however, that Gulliver is able to quit the Emperor's country before the planned impeachment is brought into effect.

A satirical sketch. It is believed that the portrayal of the Emperor of Lilliput is a satirical sketch of George I. The diversions at the royal Court, the constant war between Lilliput and Blefuscu, and the Emperor's decision to impeach and punish Gulliver are all allusions to contemporary events. The Emperor's agreeing to punish Gulliver despite the service Gulliver has done to him shows the ingratitude of kings and monarchs in general, and their arbitrariness. The wars between the two countries refer to the continuing wars in those days between England and France. Swift is also able to ridicule through this portrayal the "unmeasurable ambition of princes" because the Emperor thought of nothing less than reducing the whole country of Blefuscu into a colony governed by his viceroy. The Emperor also wanted to destroy the Big-Endian exiles living in Blefuscu and compelling them to break the smaller end of their eggs. This is obviously a reference to the persecution of Roman Caltholics by the English monarch at that time.

(*b*) **The King of Brobdingnag**

The King's sound judgment and his sense of humour. The King of Brobdingnag is simply amazed to see such a diminutive creature as Gulliver because the King himself and his subjects are people of giant sizes. The King therefore sends for three great scholars and asks them to examine the body of Gulliver and explain how this strange creature came to have such a small body. The three scholars give different explanations to the King but ultimately they agree that Gulliver is a freak of nature. Subsequently the King develops a liking for Gulliver and directs his Queen to take particular care of Gulliver. The King now takes pleasure in conversing with Gulliver, inquiring into the manners, religion, laws, government, and learning of Europe. According to Gulliver, the King has a clear understanding and an exact judgment, and the King makes very wise reflections and observations upon everything that Gulliver says. However, the King does not form any good opinion about Gulliver's country or other countries of Europe. The King in fact observes "how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as Gulliver". The King shows a sense of humour too. After Gulliver has given to the King an account of the political parties in England, the King picks up Gulliver in his right hand, strokes him gently with the other and, after a hearty fit of laughing, asks Gulliver whether the latter is a Whig or a Tory.

The King's adverse comments on English political institutions and the English people. As the King's curiosity about Gulliver's country has not yet been fully satisfied, he wants Gulliver to give him as exact an account of the government of England as he possibly can. Gulliver then gives to the King a detailed account of the English political institutions such as the House of Commons, the House of Lords, the manner in which these two Houses are constituted through popular elections and through judicious selections, and the Courts of Justice. The King, far from being impressed by this account, raises several objections to the functioning of these institutions. The King also expresses the opinion that the history of Gulliver's country is only a heap of conspiracies rebellions, murders, massacres, revolutions, and banishments, all resulting from the avarice, hypocrisy, perfidy, cruelty, rage, madness, hatred, envy, lust, malice, and ambition of the people. The King also criticizes the English political institutions and finally makes the following adverse observation with regard to Gulliver's countrymen : "I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth".

The King's adverse comment on gunpowder. Some time later, Gulliver, wanting further to win the favour of the King, tells him of the invention of gunpowder and its terrible destructive power. Gulliver then offers to reveal to the King the secret of the manu-

facture of gunpowder which can greatly add to the power and authority of the King. In case there is any rebellion against the King, the King would be able to destroy the whole metropolis by using an adequate quantity of gunpowder. The King's reaction is totally unexpected. The King is struck with horror at Gulliver's description of the terrible weapon and says that Gulliver must be a very mean and low kind of insect to entertain such inhuman ideas. The King expresses his surprise that any one should even contemplate such scenes of blood and desolation as have been described by Gulliver to illustrate the destructive power of gunpowder. According to the King, some evil genius, an enemy to mankind, must have been the inventor of this destructive agent. The King says that, while he welcomes new discoveries in art or in nature, he would rather lose half his kingdom than learn the secret of the nanufacture of gunpowder.

The King's views on the art of government. The King is also surprised when Gulliver informs him that in England hundreds of books have been written on the art of government. The King cannot understand the meaning of mystery and intrigue in connection with the running of a government. He cannot understand what Gulliver means by "secrets of State". According to the King, a government can be run on the basis of the principles of common sense, reason, justice, lenity*, and the speedy determination of civil and criminal cases. Furthermore, the King expresses the opinion that, whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before would do more essential service to his country than the whole race of politicians put together.

The role of the King of Brobdingnag. The portrayal of the King of Brobdingnag is one of the highlights in *Gulliver's Travels* . The contrast between the King of Brobdingnag and the Emperor of Lilliput is great. The portrayal of the Lilliputian Emperor was more or less a caricature but the portrayal of the Brobdingnagian King gives rise to a feeling of admiration in our minds for this ruler. This King is opposed to destruction and to war. He finds much fault with the manner in which elections in England are, or were, held. The King therefore serves as a means of Swift's satire on England and English institutions, and also on the use of destructive weapons to keep the people in awe of a monarch's authority. When Gulliver attributes the views of this King to "narrow principles" and "limited education", we perceive at once that Swift is here making use of irony in order to give further point and edge to his satire. We get the feeling that Gulliver is a fool to find fault with the King who has offered some very wholesome criticism of the European ways of governing a country. In this particular case, then, it is not Gulliver but the King of Brobdingnag who functions as

*i.e., leniency

Swift's mouthpiece. The King serves as a medium through whom Swift voices his condemnation of the objectionable practices prevailing in England. We largely agree with the King in his condemnation, though we also feel that he goes to an extreme when he denounces the entire English nation as "the most pernicious race of little odious vermin", though his criticism is justified in the light of Brobdingnagian standards of judgment.

(*c*) **Don Pedro de Mendez**

His courtesy and kindness. Don Pedro de Mendez is the Captain of a Portuguese ship which picks up Gulliver when the latter is drifting on the sea in the boat which he had himself improvised in order to be able to leave the land of the Houyhnhnms. Pedro de Mendez is described by Gulliver as a very courteous and generous person who kindly asks Gulliver to give him some account of himself and who offers to Gulliver food and drink. Gulliver is surprised to receive so much kindness from one who belongs to the race of Yahoos. (Gulliver at this stage in the course of his travels has begun to believe that all human beings are Yahoos and that goodness, virtue, and reason are to be found only in the Houyhnhnms or the horses.)

His urging Gulliver not to make any attempt to kill himself. When Gulliver is prevented from jumping into the sea to escape from the crew of this ship, Pedro de Mendez asks him the reason for so desperate an attempt. Pedro de Mendez assures Gulliver that his only purpose is to do some service to him. Pedro de Mendez speaks in such a sincere manner that Gulliver at last decides "to treat him like an animal having some little portion of Reason". At first, Pedro de Mendez does not believe Gulliver's story of his experiences, but subsequently he begins to have a better opinion of Gulliver's truthfulness. Pedro de Mendez then obtains a promise from Gulliver that the latter would make no further attempt to kill himself. While giving the promise Gulliver protests that he would suffer the greatest hardships rather than return to live among Yahoos (or among human beings including the members of his own family all of whom are now regarded by him as Yahoos).

His exhortation to Gulliver to return to his native place. On arriving in Lisbon, Pedro de Mendez takes Gulliver to his own house, gives him new clothes to wear, and keeps him in great comfort. Pedro de Mendez now also urges Gulliver to return to his native country and to live at home with his wife and children. Gulliver eventually agrees to return home.

The function of Don Pedro in the book. The portrayal of Pedro de Mendez clearly shows that Swift is not a complete hater of mankind. Perhaps Swift was right when, in his well-known letter to Alexander Pope, he had written that, although he hated nations and communities, he loved particular individuals. Pedro de Mendez

is an example of the kind of man whom Swift likes. Pedro de Mendez is amiable, courteous, hospitable, kind-hearted, and sympathetic. Such lovable qualities would make an individual worthy of anybody's esteem. It is therefore surprising that Gulliver remains utterly unmoved and unaffected by the behaviour of Pedro de Mendez, and continues to think all human beings to be Yahoos. The fact that Gulliver's aversion to the human race remains absolutely the same despite his contact with Pedro de Mendez shows that now Swift is satirizing Gulliver himself. At this stage Gulliver seems to have lost his own reason and has become so prejudiced against the human race that even the goodness of certain particular individuals escapes his notice. Don Pedro thus has an important function in the book. It is because of his portrayal as a thorough gentleman worthy of our greatest regard that we are forced to the conclusion that Gulliver at this point has become a complete misanthrope incapable of recognizing goodness even in those human beings who possess it in a striking degree.

22

Select Literary Criticism

(1)

Characteristics

"As an author there are three peculiarities remarkable in the character of Swift. The first of these has been rarely conceded to an author, at least by his contemporaries. It is the distinguished attribute of originality, and it cannot be refused to Swift by the most severe critic. Even Johnson has allowed that perhaps no author can be found who has borrowed so little, or has so well maintained his claim to be considered as original. There was indeed nothing written before his time which could serve for his model, and the few hints which he has adopted from other authors bear no more resemblance to his composition than the green flax to the cable which is formed from it.

The second peculiarity......is his total indifference to literary fame. Swift executed his various and numerous works as a carpenter forms wedges, mallets, or other implements of his art, not with the purpose of distinguishing himself by the workmanship bestowed on the tools themselves, but solely in order to render them fit for accomplishing a certain purpose, beyond which they were of no value in his eyes. He is often anxious about the success of his argument, and angrily jealous of those who debate the principles and the purpose for which he assumes the pen, but he evinces on all occasions, an unaffected indifference for the fate of his writings, provided the end of their publication was answered. The careless mode in which Swift suffered his works to get to the public, his refusing them the credit of his name, and his renouncing all connection with the profits of literature, indicate his disdain of the character of a professional author.

The third distinguishing mark of Swift's literary career is that......he has never attempted any style of composition in which he has not obtained a distinguished pitch of excellence. We may often think the immediate mode exercising has talents trifling, and sometimes coarse and offensive ; but his Anglo-latin verses, his riddles, his indelicate descriptions, and his violent political satires, are in their various departments as excellent as the subjects admit-

ted and only leave us room occasionally to regret that so much talent was not uniformaly employed upon nobler topics".

—*Sir Walter Scott*

(2)

Wit and Bitterness

"Rabelais, Voltaire and Swift have been accounted the three greatest wits in modern times ; but their wit was of a peculiar kind in each. They are little beholden to each other, there is some resemblance between Lord Peter in the *Tale of a Tub*, and Rabelais' Friar John ; but in general they are all three authors of a substantive character in themselves. Swift's wit (particularly in his chief prose works) was serious, saturnine and practical ; Rabelais' was fantastical and joyous ; Voltaire's was light, sportive, and verbal. Swift's wit was the wit of sense ; Rabelais', the wit of nonsense ; Voltaire's, of indifference to both. The ludicrous in Swift arises out of his keen sense of impropriety, his soreness and impatience of the least absurdity. He separates, with a severe and caustic air, truth from falsehood, folly from wisdom, 'shews vice her own image, scorn her own feature', and it is the force, the precision, and the honest abruptness with which the separation is made, that excites our surprise, our admiration and laughter. He sets a mark of reprobation on that which offends good sense and good manners, which cannot be mistaken, and which holds it up to our ridicule and contempt ever after......His better genius was his spleen. It was the biting acrimony of his temper that sharpened his other faculties. The truth of his perception produced the pointed coruscations of his wit : his playful irony was the result of inward bitterness of thought ; his imagination was the product of the literal, dry, incorrigible tenaciousness of his understanding...His feverish impatience made him view the infirmities of that great baby the world, with the same scrutinizing glance and jealous irritability that a parent regards the failings of its offspring ; but as Rousseau has well observed, parents have not on this account been supposed to have more affection for other people's children than their own."

—*William Hazlitt*

(3)

Style

"In his works he has given us different specimens, both of sentiment and expression. His *Tale of a Tub* has little resemblance to his other pieces. It exhibits a vehemence and rapidity of mind, a copiousness of images and vivacity of diction such as he afterwards never possessed or never exerted. It is of a mode so distinct and peculiar that it must be considered by itself ; what is true of that is not true of any thing else which he has written.

In his other works is found an equable tenor of easy language,

which rather trickles than flows. His delight was in simplicity. That he has in his works no metaphors, as has been said, is not true ; but his few metaphors seem to be received rather by necessity than choice. His studied purity ; and though perhaps all his structures are not exact, yet it is not often that solecisms can be found : and whoever depends on his authority may generally conclude himself safe. His sentences are never too much dilated or contracted ; and it will not be easy to find any embarrassment in the complication of his clauses, any inconsequence in his connections or abruptness in his transitions.

His style was well suited to his thoughts, which are never subtilised by nice disquisitions, decorated by sparkling conceits, elevated by ambitious sentences or variegated by far-sought learning. He pays no court to the passions ; he excites neither surprise nor admiration ; he always understands himself, and his reader always understands him : the peruser of Swift wants little previous knowledge ; it will be sufficient that he is acquainted with common words and common things ; he is neither required to mount elevations nor to explore profundities ; his passage is always on a level, along solid ground, without asperities, without obstruction.

This easy and safe conveyance of meaning it was Swift's desire to attain, and for having attained he deserves praise, though perhaps not the highest praise. For purposes merely didactic, when something is to be told that was not known before, it is the best mode, but against that intention by which known truths are suffered to lie neglected it makes no provision, it instructs but does not persuade."

—*Samuel Johnson*

(4)

Style

"Swift's style is very near perfection, clear, pointed, precise. He seems to have no difficulty in finding words to express exactly the impression which he wishes to convey. The sentences are not always grammatically correct, but they come home to the reader, like the words of a great orator or advocate, with convincing force. He realizes so clearly what he is describing that the reader, is of necessity, interested and impressed. There are no tricks of style, no recurring phrases ; no ornaments, no studied effects, the object is attained without apparent effort, an outward gravity masking the underlying satire or cynicism, and an apparent calmness concealing bitter invective. There is never any doubt of his earnestness, whatever may be the mockery on the surface. For the metaphysical and the speculative, he has no sympathy."

—*G. A. Aitkens*

(5)

Style

"As a literary artist he is consummate in his skill : yet no man

probably ever attended less to rules of art. His charm chiefly lies in the absolute ease with which he could create by words the very mood—humorous or grave, gay or cynical, profoundly misanthropic, or playful and tender—in which he desired to place his reader. By some of the most competent critics, his prose has been held to be perfection of English style, not certainly because of its finish or elaboration ; not because it is without inaccuracy and minor incorrectness : but because it is so absolutely clear and direct, and moves with such perfection of unstudied and inimitable ease. His works occupy a place altogether unique in our own, or any other literature. They fall into line with no order of creative genius. But their chief literary interest lies in this, that whatever the subject of which they treat, whatever the special manner of that treatment : they all show that highest power of genius as applied to literary creation, which makes written language the absolute slave of thought and mood that have to be conveyed, reflecting their slightest variation, and repeating, without apparent effort, the most subtle of their passing phases."

—*Henry Craik*

(6)

Satire

"A satire of Swift's is......an exhibited situation or series of such situations. Once the situation has been suggested, once its tone, its flavor have been given, it promptly takes command of itself and proceeds to grow and organize by virtue of its own inherent principles. It is a state of affairs within which, as we mistakenly put it, "anything can happen" mistakenly because everything that does happen is instantly recognized as a part of *this*, a unique situation. Nevertheless, the room for self-improvisation seems limitless, and the comic scale ranges from the hilarious to the grim. It is to be observed that the satirist is himself not involved : he is as much an observer, as much outside all the fuss and nonsense, as we are... for the incidents which come to pass no one can be held responsible, any more than for the ideas and emotions which appear. What we have is, literally an exhibition : everything is shown ; everything is at least one degree removed from reality. In short, the situation may be thought of as a kind of chamber within which ideas and emotions are made to move and collide at accelerated speed.

With a recognition of the situation as such comes a perception of the functional character of Swift's favourite devices, which serve both in the creation of the situation and in the generation of the kinetic energy by which it is sustained. There are at least five of these devices that strike us forcibly ; drama by way of created characters ; parody, or at any rate the imitation of a specific literary genre ; allegory ; the "myth" ; and "discoveries, projects, and machines"."

—*Ricardo Quintana*

(7)

Humanity

"This ferocious satirist had a heart as tender as beats in any breast. He was disappointed in material ambition, a victim of hope deferred; far sadder, he was debarred from conjugal love, either by his fear of madness or by some other and more mysterious ban. Yet he won the love of a people, and kept it for thirty years; he was the friend of Gay and Prior, of Pope and Berkley, of Addison and Arbuthnot, and many more, though it must be confessed that he did not suffer fools gladly; and he was beloved in middle age, as all the world knows, by two devoted women; let those who doubt his tenderness read the *Journal to Stella*, never meant but for the eyes of the person to whom it was addressed. There are those, however, who will not be convinced, and these see only in the inscription, "Only a woman's hair", attached to a lock of Stella's hair, found at his death, a last sneer of him whom Addison pronounced "the greatest genius of the nation!" "

—*Lewis Melville*

(8)

The Church

"By conviction and professional bias he was a stern high churchman. Denominationalism may have been already a declining force in British politics, but since for another couple of centuries church and chapel were to remain focal points of political loyalties. Swift may be forgiven for not realising that theological issues were relatively speaking, losing or at least about to lose, their earlier significance. In fact to him, as to many keen churchmen, politics largely derived their importance from the effect which changes in the political balance of power might have on the fortunes of the Church of England. Educated in an Anglican university and coming to intellectual maturity in the golden age of anglicanism. Swift was absolutely convinced of the essential importance to a community of the national church, and the pre-eminent claims of the protestant churches of England and Ireland to be taken into a partnership with the state which would confer inestimable benefit on the community. At the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, Anglican divines, often men of wide erudition and powerful intellect, were confident that their church provided a most desirable *via media* between the extravagances and absurdities of Geneva and Rome. Level headed rational moderation was their ideal which Swift shared."

—*R. B. McDowell*

(9)

Poetry

"Plain, direct, sensible, outspoken, and devoid of ornament, the

verse of Swift has not lost its appeal for us. It gives us intimate glimpses of his puzzling personality; it expresses instantly his likes and dislikes with a grace and vehemence which hold us to the page. Much of it was occasional and remained unpublished during his lifetime. We must accept its contradictory moods and fits of honest rage. Juvenal, in his notorious Sixth Satire, denounced in wanton detail the profligacy of Roman ladies of fashion. Swift is sometimes as ferocious in his denunciations of the frivolity of Augustan fashion and, with an illogicality which is difficult to understand, he dashed down on the page, with exact quill, his remonstrations against the female functions, mingling sheer disgust with it, if I may say so, a comic relief which has been denied to him by many critics, and then turning to write a sheet of complimentary tender verses."

—*Austin Clark*

(10)

Humour

"The hall-mark of a true humourist is his ability to laugh at himself. For all Swift's pride and arrogance he possessed this power to an unusual degree; he might rail at the whole human race, but he never forgot for long that he himself was a member of it. Sometimes his self-ridicule flash out in a casual remark, as in the letter (8 December, 1719) where he mentions suffering from a 'painful broken shin, which I skilfully cook up into a sore of Importance'. At other times he will devote an entire poem to it, like the rueful account of his relations with Harley given in 'Part of the Seventh Epistle of the First Book of Horace Imitated': The 'Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift' are so well known that we forget their astonishing originality. True, they end with a total vindication of his career, but has any other writer viewed a possible unsympathetic response to his death with such cheerful objectivity?"

—*Vivian Mercier*

(11)

Place in Literature

"Perhaps there has never been in the country another writer, with the exception of the supreme head of English letters, in whom can be discerned the same force of intellect. Others may amuse, may touch the heart, may arouse good passions and bad, but no man appeals so directly to the brain. Yet, curiously enough, Swift has found his severest critics among men of genius...Dr. Johnson... had so erroneous an impression of the gifts of a man still greater that he would not ascribe to him the honour of having written *A Tale of a Tub*. "Swift has a higher reputation than he deserves," he said in 1763. . "His excellence is strong sense; for his humour, though very well, is not remarkably good. I doubt whether *A Tale of a Tub* be his; for he never owned it, and it is much above his usual manner." This may serve to make critics humble, for if in this manner Johnson tripped, who may not fall?"

—*Lewis Melville*

(12)

Character

"Swift had in his lifetime the power of arousing the strongest feelings either of admiration and loyalty or of dislike and active hatred, and the opposition continues to be vigorous. One day I hear his praises, and the next I hear bitter things said about him; and then I meet someone who is constrained to admire without in the least liking him. Swift has experienced every degree of imperfect sympathy. He never invites us to come to terms with him; on the contrary he may suggest that he would prefer us to keep our distance. All his chosen friends had to make the first advances. Dr. Swift, upon the score of his merit and extraordinary qualities, doth claim the sole and undoubted right, and that all persons whatsoever shall make such advances to him as he pleases to demand, any law, claim, custom, privilege of sex, beauty, fortune or quality to the contrary notwithstanding,—a humorous decree promulgated for the instruction of a young lady; but he acted on it all his life. The Earl of Oxford made the first advances when Swift joined the Tory party. And so it is with us."

—*D. Nichol Smith*

(13)

Ideology

"We are right to think of Swift as a rebel and an iconoclast, but except in certain secondary matters, such as insistence that women should receive the same education as men, he cannot be labelled 'Left'. He is Tory anarchist despising authority while disbelieving in liberty and preserving the aristocratic outlook while seeing clearly that the existing aristocracy is degenerate and contemptible, when Swift utters one of his characteristic diatribes against the rich and powerful, one must probably......write off something for the fact that he himself belonged to the less successful party, and was personally disappointed. The "outs" for obvious reasons, are always more radical than the " ins". But the most essential thing in Swift is his inability to believe that life—ordinary life on the solid earth, and not some rationalized, deodorized verson of it—could be made worth living.

—*George Orwell*

(14)

Ideology

"Liberty depended upon a balance within the State, like that of the 'humours' in a human body, or like that 'unit of being Dante compared to a perfectly proportioned human body, and for its sake Swift was prepared to sacrifice what seems to the modern man liberty itself. 'The odds were a hundred to one', he wrote, that 'violent zeal for the truth' came out of 'petulancy, ambition, or pride'. He himself might prefer a republic to a monarchy,

but did he open his mouth upon the subject would be deservedly hanged. Had he religious doubts he was not to blame so long as he kept them to himself, for God had given him reason. It was the attitude of many a modern Catholic who thinks, though upon different grounds that our civilization may sink into a decadence like that of Rome. But sometimes belief itself must be hidden...... Had not the early Christians kept silent about the divinity of Christ, should not the missionaries to China 'soften' it? He preached as law commanded a man could save his soul doubtless in any religion which taught submission to the Will of God, but only one State could protect his body; and how could it protect this body if rent apart by those cranks and sectaries mocked in his *Tale of a Tub*? Had not French Huguenots and English Dissenters alike sinned against the State? Except at those moments of great public disturbance, when a man must choose his creed or his kind, let him think his own thoughts in silence."

—*W. B. Yeats*

(15)

Ideology

"Among the great Augustans who looked to the integral life of the past and strove to protect and to adapt what still survived against the inroads of Enlightenment, Swift is the most indirect, most shifting, yet most inexorable of all. He is deeply conscious of the task that seems to him as the moralist he always—and— rightly claimed to be and as a man whose personal need to feel himself in control of experience is peculiarly strong. His materials and their organisation, the form and content of the satires, are his response to particular situation at a time when, within man and without, chaos constantly threatened. Defence was essential, yet it could be achieved only by vigilant attack, sustained simultaneously on many fronts. Our first impression, in Swift's work, is of the elusive brilliance of the attack; a glancing, dazzling mind appears to be concerned solely with the presentation of absurdity or of evil, shifting its point of view constantly the better to perform its task. But as we grow accustomed to his ways of thinking and feeling we become aware that at the heart of Swift's work are unity and consistency and we see that the attack is also a defence, that tools of destruction are being employed for a positive and constructive purpose. The inventiveness and resourcefulness of his satiric method are seen as arising directly out of the necessities of his mind and of his age; the changing complications of his irony are the necessary expression of an untiring devotion to a few certainties that life affords. For all his elusiveness and indirection, his readiness to compromise or, to change his ground, few writers have been more essentially consistent than Swift, but his consistency could be sustained only by such methods as these. Balance in the state or in the individual mind could be kept only by an agile shifting of weights."

—*Kathleen Williams*

(16)

Swift and the Enlightenment

"It is as satiric artist that Swift's individuality is most striking, but here too it is necessary to see him in his age if we are not to misinterpret the spirit in which he worked and the effects he achieved. It is really a question of defining for ourselves the situation of the literary artist in the Enlightenment. The nineteenth century made the mistake of trying to interpret eighteenth century letters in terms that were still essentially those of Romantic art and experience. The Romantic myth which established itself throughout Europe in the decades following upon the French Revolution gave to the self a new importance and looked to individual and highly personal experience or its themes. The Enlightenment simply did not think and feel and express itself in this way. If it had a myth, it was that of the normal man and normal representative experience. Its literary forms were established and well differentiated types—the epic, the pastoral poem, etc.—governed by accepted principles of composition essentially rhetorical. So far from remaining untouched by his spirit prevailing in the world of letters Swift was in his own way fully responsive to it. When he wrote on public matters, he showed how well he understood the meaning of decorum through use of a style exactly suitable to the occasion at hand. In his poetry he has almost always guided by his sense of genre, imitating Horace, working with the language and rhythm of Samuel Butler, and again parodying the matter and superficial manner of the pastoral. Nor did he, as a satirist, break with this general tradition. He saw satire as having its proper function within both the social and the literary scheme. Furthermore, for the chastisement of folly and the depiction of the ridiculous there were appropriate devices of style in the way of theme, imagery, and an order of language."

—*Ricardo Quintana*

(17)

Point of View

In the prose of Addison and Steele, of Swift and Arbuthnot and Mandeville, the same tradition of polite writing persists. By choice or circumstance, the greater part of what they wrote took the form of the author addressing the reader : Isaac Bickerstaff ; Mr. Spectator, Lemuel Gulliver, the imaginary projector in *A Modest Proposal*, and so on, are all writing in the first person...the consciousness of a reader, real or imaginary, acts as a continual discipline to the writer. It encourages him... to discourse amiably and politely, it makes pedantry and self-indulgence of all kinds almost impossible, and it keeps the tone lively. The eighteenth century writer succeeded to a remarkable degree in writing personally without thrusting his personality upon the reader. He did this either by adopting a mask (Mr. Spectator, Lemuel Gulliver, Captain Hercules Vinegar, the Rambler) or by exercising a natural or

acquired restraint which kept him fiom insisting too much upon his own personality, when he appeared in public.

—*James R. Sutherland*

(18)

Individual Rhythm

It is good prose when it allows the writer's meaning to come through with the least possible loss of significance and nuance, as a landscape is seen through a clear window. Something very near to this was achieved by many eighteenth century writers and notably by Swift. We can read page after page of Swift, absorbing the ideas completely and continuously, and scarcely conscious of the author. Scarcely conscious but not quite unaware of the author : Swift still has his own unmistakable voice, and no good prose has the transparency or anonymity of a window-pane. What is it that we recognise when we say, 'That is Swift,' would be hard to define ; but I suspect that in the final analysis what is most personal to a prose writer is an individual rhythm, a rhythm of both thought and language.

—*James R. Sutherland*

(19)

Swift as a Child of his Age

It may help us to assess Swift more competently if we rob him a little of his uniqueness (though not of his literary greatness) in viewing the age. Envision him as one of a collective body of eighteenth century Jeremiahs whose lamentations were filling the air. The Tory wits... reflected, even generated, their fair share of the gloom-thickened atmosphere of the period of Queen Anne and the first Georges. But in this limited respect there was nothing singular, except their talents ; about Swift and his friends—Pope, Gay, Prior, Arbuthnot, and Parnell...Many looked about and saw widely prevailing infection, a culture losing its vigour, and its better values, under the impact of bribery, luxury, political faction, deteriorated education, an immoral stage, ostentatious fashions, a dissolute and slothful poor, an irresponsible aristocracy, loss of public spirit, imitation of French and Italian fopperies, the vulgarisation of the arts, and a dozen other such evils. But only a person of the rarest gifts, such as Swift, could transmute these into an imperishable imaginative comment on the nature of man and society.

—*Louis A. Landa*

(20)

Satirical Devices

He was always looking for apt forms and vehicles to convey his satirical attack. He lived and wrote in an age of satire, and many such forms and vechicles were in regular use ; some, indeed, had

been used so often that they were almost worn out, and no longer generated that small shock of surprise which we often obtain from ambiguities, innuendoes, understatements and ironies of all kinds. Even Swift himself made use of the stock satirical devices, as an *Hue and Cry after Dismal* : but more often he will be found devising new and ingenious methods for exposing his victims or for troubling the conscience of his reader....As a satirist...he knew that he had to capture and hold the attention of possibly hostile or unwilling readers, and to say what he had to say in such a pursuasive fashion that they would be converted to his way of thinking when he had said it....In his general satire, therefore, he was always looking for ways and means of stealing unawares upon his readers, outflanking them, infiltrating into their position, he is an adept at throwing dust in our eyes, at distracting attention by his engagingly Irish flow of talk until he has got us where he wants us, and we cannot possibly avoid seeing what he is determined we shall see.

—*James Sutherland*

(21)

Interpretation

"In the world of political thought, the clash between the old and new is perhaps nowhere as concretely exhibited as in the contrasting theories regarding the state of nature. For not in *Gulliver* only are Yahoos set over against Houyhnhnms. In fact it looks like too simple a discovery to point out that in the last voyage of the *Travels* we have, designedly or not, Hobbes contrasted with Locke. And yet the parallel holds good surprisingly well. Men in Hobbes' state of nature like Swift's Yahoos, are "in the condition which is called war ; and such a war as is of every man against every man...with no arts, no letters, no society, and which is worst of all, continual fear of violent danger ; and the life of man, solitary. poor, nasty, brutish, and short." And while Hobbes, brevity of description with regard to his state of war prevents elaboration of parallel, the corresponding similarity between Locke and Swift is certainly tempting. Men in Locke's state of nature, like the Houyhnhnms, are rational creatures living together according to reason, without a common superior,"—in a state of liberty without licence, every one administering the laws of nature for himself, laws of temperance and mutual benevolence. The relation of Swift to Hobbes and to Locke is a subject for separate investigation. On the whole, I think (and Swift's political writings would furnish evidence in abundance) he stands nearer to Hobbes. In *Gulliver's Travels*, however, Swift is clearly neither Hobbes, nor Locke. Gulliver is neither Yahoo nor Houyhnhnm. He cannot attain to the rational felicity of the Houyhnhnms. Neither has he sunk to the level of the Yahoos, though this is a doubtful advantage. He lacks the strength of a healthy animal, and his glimmering of reason has unhappily burdened him with responsibility of conscience.

Indeed, if Swift's own hints regarding the meaning of his

book are heeded, it is in the contrast between Yahoo and Houyhnhnm that his main thesis lies hid. Gulliver occupying a position between the two, part beast, part reason, is Swift's allegorical picture of the dual nature of man. He is not Houyhnhnm, *animal rationale*, nor is he Yahoo. He is *rationis capax*. One could apply to *Gulliver's Travels*, a passage of Cicero, quoted with approval by both St. Augustine and Boyle : "Nature has been to man not a mother but a step-mother—sending him into the world naked, frail, and infirm, toiling under a burden of care, fearful, slothful, and given over to lust, but not without a spark of divine reason."

—*T. O. Wedel*

(22)

Irony

"To direct the attention upon Swift's irony gives...the best chance of dealing adequately, without deviation or confusion, with what is essential in his work. But it involves...also...a slight to the classical status of *Gulliver's Travels*, a book which, though it may represent Swift's most impressive achievement in the way of complete creation—the thing achieved and detached—does not give best opportunities for examining his irony. And *Gulliver's Travels*, one readily agrees, hasn't its classical status for nothing. But neither is it for nothing that, suitably abbreviated, it has become a classic for children. What for the adult reader constitutes its peculiar force—what puts it in so different a class from *Robinson Crusoe*—resides for the most part in the fourth book (to a less extent in the third). The adult may re-read the first two parts, as he may *Robinson Crusoe*, with great interest, but his interest, apart from being more critically conscious, will not be of a different order from the child's. He will, of course, be aware of an ingenuity of political satire in *Lilliput*, but the political satire is, unless for historians, not very much alive today. And even the more general satire characteristic of the second book will not strike him as very subtle. His main satisfaction, a great deal enhanced no doubt, by the ironic seasoning, will be that which Swift, the student of the *Mariner's Magazine* and of traveller's relations, aimed to supply in the bare precision and the matter-of-fact realness of his narrative : But what in Swift is most important, the disturbing characteristic of his genius, is a peculiar emotional intensity ; that which, in *Gulliver*, confronts us in the Struldbrugs and the Yahoos. It is what we find ourselves contemplating when elsewhere we examine his irony."

—*F. R. Leavis*

(23)

Satire

"The actual, as opposed to the fictive, situation, of course, is that Swift has created two dominant points of view to control

materials of the *Travels* : that of his favourite *ingenu* (the younger Gulliver and that of the misanthrope. The technique has obvious advantages. An *ingenu* is a superb agent of indirect satire as he roams the world uncritically recording or embracing the folly which it is the satirist's business to undermine : Flimnap, the treasurer is allowed to cut a caper on the straight rope at least an inch higher than any other Lord in the whole Empire. On the other hand, a misanthrope can develop all the great power of direct, hyperbolic criticism. By allowing Gulliver, an uncritical lover of man, to become an uncritical hater of man, Swift has it both ways

The technique is not that of the novelist. Swift pays little regard to psychological consistency ; Gulliver's character can hardly be said to develop, it simply changes. If one takes seriously the premises that Gulliver writes his memories after his rebirth, then many passages in the early voyages turn out to be inconsistent and out of character. There are, says Gulliver of Lilliput, "some laws and customs in the Empire very peculiar ; and if they were not so directly contrary to those of my own dear country, I should be tempted to say a little in their justification." (The laws from Swift's point of view of reason are excellent). Here Gulliver is trapped in a conflict between his patriotism and his reason ; as he is an *ingenu* his patriotism wins. But note the tense: I should be tempted", that is, now at the time of writing. Given this tense, and given the logic of the controlling situation, it must follow that this is the utterance of Gulliver as he composes the work. At the time he writes, however, Gulliver is committed so irrevocably to the claims of reason that the appeal of patriotism could not possibly have meaning for him, could not, that is if we assume general consistency in Gulliver's character."

—Robert C. Elliott

(24)

Satire

'In Swift's satire we see a traveller telling the representatives of imaginary societies the weaknesses of our own society, and the direct nature of such satire being put in an indirect frame is reinforced by the instructive comments of the listener, discourse becomes dialogue, for Swift adds a second actor and revolutionises the form as much as Aeschylus did his......In *Gulliver's Travels* the criticism of society is finite and particular, sharply focussed and transfixing both Gulliver and the reader...Swift's satire-by-social-comparison is the most effective mode within his work, for although he uses a great variety of satiric methods, exaggeration and diminution, relativism carried to the ultimate, dichotomies between physical size and moral worth or between reason and the passions, mock computations which increase grotesqueness, descriptions of peculiar practices in imaginary societies which turn out to be extremely similar to our own (the political scheming in Lilliput, marital infidelity and scientific incompetence in Laputa), the

humiliation and ultimate over-inflation of his narrative *persona*—nevertheless—the most telling blows, those which most destroy man's pride in his political or legal systems, his moral standards and intellectual achievements, even his unalterable possession of human nature, this whole satiric annihilation of man is most forcibly achieved in the dual process of Gulliver explaining to a foreign interlocutor how we live, and faithfully recording that foreigner's comments on us—None of the accepted sources for *Gulliver's Travels* presents a closer parallel for the basic situation of a political and ethical attack on our society by juxtaposition with that of an imaginary one."

—Brian Vickers

(25)

Satire

"If Swift and More resemble each other in their use of satiric techniques and targets, then they do so in one other essential feature, the use of persona. Gulliver and Raphael are the mediators whose experience bring the idea of our society into corrossive contact with that of an imaginary society. As personalities (or rather, as instruments of satire) they are quite different in tone, Raphael giving a consistently positive account of social reforms, Gulliver moving from embarrassed agreement with the King of Brobdingnag (his reservations about that ruler's intelligence only reinforce the criticism) to an absolute acceptance of the Houyhnhnm point of view (again complicated by his acceptance of their view point on the purely physical inferiority of man which is patently ridiculous : as well as man's moral inferiority which is undeniable). But although the satiric personae differ in application there are some interesting similarities, two minor, one major. First their surnames : Hythlodaeus' means 'dispenser of nonsense', and more than one critic has suggested that 'Gulliver' has overtones of 'gullible' and 'gull', a suggestion of hoax. Secondly, their reliability. Swift is at great pains to establish Gulliver's accuracy as a recording agent, from the Publisher's letter to the Reader announcing that a great many of his factual and 'minute Descriptions' have had to be deleted, through the whole process by which Gulliver measures, computes, and estimates size, quantity and value—a process wonderfully adapted to satire, as several recent studies have shown. More has nothing as complex as this, but in his prefatory letter to Peter Giles he goes out of his way to establish his own accuracy and that of his *personae* by writing that Raphael 'has caused me to feel very doubtful on one point according to my own recollection. Hythlodaeus declared that the bridge which spanned the river Anydrus at Amaurotum is five hundred paces in length. But my John says that two hundred must be taken off, for the river there is not more than three hundred paces in breadth'."

—Brian Vickers

(26)

Misanthropy

"One of the most widely known and quoted passages in the book is the king of Brobdingnag's judgement on Gulliver's fellow Europeans as the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth.

This judgement has been on occasion grossly misinterpreted as Swift's misanthropic opinion of mankind, but in the context of argument, the situation is quite complex. First of all, of course, it is the king's opinion. He specifically says that from Gulliver's own 'Relation and the Answers' (that he has with much pains wringed and extorted,) he cannot but conclude this. That is Gulliver's argumentative performance provokes the judgement. There is uncertainty about the truth of Gulliver's 'Relation' and 'Answers' and further uncertainty about whether the king has reasonably drawn this conclusion. Finally, the reader's response must take in account how ineptly Gulliver performs in answering the king's questions. He performs badly through pride, obtuseness and dishonesty."

—*Angus Ross*

(27)

Structure

"The four books themselves are linked by contrasts, and each illuminates its predecessors. The nature of the symbolism makes this obvious for the first two books, but it is easy to overlook the links between the second and third and the third and fourth. Swift intends to effect the useful mathematics of the Brobdingnagians with the impractical mathematical interests of the Laputians, who measure Gulliver for a suit of clothes by taking his altitude by a quadrant (the clothes don't fit). In the third book he is preoccupied with immortality, or the separation of body and soul. The indifference of the Houyhnhnm to approaching death, or time, is a commentary on the morbid picture of the Struldbrugs, whose immortality is a living death "

—*Joseph Horrell*

(28)

Society

"No ideal society is anywhere presented, but the contrast between different groups is used to discuss or suggest a way of looking at society itself as a controlling force on human nature *and* a corrupter of that nature. The impossible simplicity of the horses' society points to the difficulties of human government. In the three monarchies of Lilliput, Brobdingnag and Laputa, the hierarchical arrangements govern the way Gulliver enters 'into' these nations. A

narrative as well as a symbolic structure is provided by the deployment of social details. The first three books do not really present three different societies, but three views of the same society. In Book IV the joke at the outset is to see Gulliver walking into a completely different situation armed with assumptions and expectations as inappropriate as the 'Bracelets, Glass Rings, and other Toys' he has about him to 'purchase his life'."

—*Angus Ross*

(29)

Voyage

"As an imaginary voyage, *Gulliver's Travels* is a consummate parody which preserves much of the spirit, the imaginative principle, of the real voyage. But if this is the main contrast that runs through the book, we are sometimes aware of another one or at least the opportunity for another one, for there are moments when we have to ask ourselves whether our imaginary voyage is not becoming a parody of itself—whether, for instance, the Utopian elements are not slyly humorous. Furthermore, as the political allegory comes and goes we are left with further questions and further points of reference to keep track of. The tone modulates from that of the harsh indictment of crime and folly to good-humoured fantasy. It was once assumed that Gulliver and his creator were to all intents and purposes the same person, but the full realization that Swift has created a fictional character has not put an end to our troubles. To say that Gulliver is not Swift, merely raises a new set of questions. Who is Gulliver ? What is it that happens to him ? How have he and his experience been contrived by this satirist who has succeeded in writing a merry work that has never ceased to vex the world ?"

—*Ricardo Quintana*

(30)

Philosophy

"*Gulliver* was written in an age when new beliefs were abroad, long-buried heresies were rising up in new forms. Swift especially detested the deists, with their reliance on reason. And there had originated, before Swift wrote *Gulliver*, the potent concept of the innate "moral sense". According to this theory as formulated by Shaftesbury, the human being is naturally adapted to live virtuously in the universe, and if he fails to do so it is because his training and man-made environment somehow warp the instinctive operation of the sense of right and wrong. This was a revival, on a secular level, of that Palagianism which the church opposed. The question of human nature was involved also in the rising faith of "progress," which assumed a perfecting of human behaviour in proportion to the increase of knowledge. All of these ideas, with their emphasis on men's completeness and self-sufficiency, would have seemed to Donne no less than to Swift signs of an "age of pride." The peculiar passion

with which Swift attacked that vicious propensity to pride in man is understandable."

—*Ernest Tuveson*

(31)

Meaning

"The reader, then, must be warned from the start : *Gulliver's Travels* is a perpetual unfinished argument, one from which flatly contradictory morals have been and still can be extracted. Perhaps one service which a 1967 introduction can do is to indicate how the controversy has proceeded over the past two and a half centuries and what temporary and insecure resting place has now been reached. And let no reader be deterred by the experts from forming his own judgement. On this subject, some of the most eminent authorities have made the most eminent asses of themselves, a development which Swift foresaw and invited. He says in the last chapter that he hopes he may pronounce himself 'an author perfectly blameless, against whom the tribe of answerers, considerers, observers, reflecters, detectors, remarkers, will never be able to find matter of exercising their talents.' By which, of course, he meant the opposite. One of the fascinations of *Gulliver's Travels* is that, although every phrase seems immediately comprehensible, the whole subject-matter is endlessly complex."

—*Michael Foot*

(32)

Roles

"Gulliver first glimpses himself early in his voyages to Brobdingnag, and he joins the Brobdingnagians in their amusement at the sight : "Neither indeed could I forbear smiling at myself, when the Queen used to place me upon her Hand towards a Looking-Glass, by which both our persons appeared before me in full View together ; and there could be nothing more ridiculous than the Comparison." The result of his first confrontation is to make Gulliver think that he is no longer what he was before : "So that I really began to imagine myself dwindled many Degrees below my usual Size." Like Alice in Wonderland, Gulliver has found that "being so many different sizes...is very confusing" : and, like Alice, Gulliver would find it hard to answer the Caterpillar's question: "Who are you ?" Self-abasement has begun, and Gulliver, tries now to avoid his reflection ; it is painful he discovers, to be laughable—a reminder, once more of the Hobbesian theory of laughter. When Gulliver is rescued from the sea, he tells the ship's captain of his experiences in an aside to the reader : "For, indeed, while I was in that Prince's Country, I could never endure to look in a Glass after mine Eyes had been accustomed to such prodigious objects ; because the Comparison gave me so despicable a Conceit of myself."

—*W. B. Carnochan*

(33)

Allegory

"In 1919 Sir Charles Firth systematically identified both the events and the personalities alluded to in Gulliver's first voyage. Arguing that Swift wrote the chapters partly in 1714 and partly after 1720, he sought to relate the allusions both to Anne's reign and to the 1720s. Thus he saw the Empress's reaction to Gulliver's firefighting exploit as a reference to Anne's hostile reception of Swift's *A Tale of a Tub*, while he placed the diversions at the Lilliputian court several years later in the reign of George I : Flimnap thereby becomes Sir Robert Walpole, and his prowess on the rope symbolises Walpole's dexterity in parliamentary tactics and political intrigues, while the cushion that broke his fall represents the Duchess of Kendal, one of George I's mistresses ; the coloured threads represent the Orders of the Thistle, Bath and Garter. Again Gulliver's flight to Blefuscu to escape the consequences of his impeachment Firth saw as a close parallel of Bolingbroke's flight to France in 1715, while the friendly minister Reldresal he equated with Cartaret, who, as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, turned a blind eye on Swift's authorship of the Drapier Letters in 1724. Finally Firth identified Skyresh Bolgolan, Gulliver's Chief opponent, with the Earl of Nottingham, who became a personal enemy of Swift in the years before 1714."

—*W. A. Speck*

(34)

Satiric Realism

"*Gulliver's Travels* singularly broadens the indictment of every effort by which the human mind claims to know and to understand. Philosophy appears in the light of an ambitious jargon ; metaphysics, of a mystification ; while theory, that sterile activity, shackles the efficient play of practice in all domains and in a hundred and one different ways. This satiric realism is given free scope in the painting of the illusory kingdom of Laputa. The fever of financial speculation, of rational inquiry, and, already, of mechanical progress, which the society of that day freely shows, is presented as the agitated ardour of over-heated brains in which are inceasingly hatched all manner of 'projects, and inventions, preposterous chimeras."

—*Cazamian*

(35)

Reversal

"Gulliver, now infinitesimally tiny, is placed on the same handkerchief on which he had paraded the armies of Lilliput. He is molested by gigantic cats and fierce rates ; retrieved by a dog ; persecuted by a dwarf. He examines the huge lice on the beggars of Brobdingnag ; is knocked over by hailstones ; battles with flies.

The Maids of Honour at the court strip him naked and sport with him on their monstrous breasts—or worse—while he swoons under their perfume. A frog leaps across his body to smear him with "its odious slime." A pet monkey kidnaps him and, high, on the ridges and eaves of the imperial palace, stuffs his mouth with filthy food, taken from its jowls. Under the mode of comedy, and described with a monumental innocence, this voyage is surely the most brilliant evocation in our letters of not merely the Freudian, but, as it were, the Darwinian nightmare.

—*Maxwell Geismar*

(36)

The Nature of Manhood

Gulliver, the Son of Adam, as I have called him, is posed with a problem, and by the same token poses a problem for the reader which can be stated in the traditional language of theology. Whether we use the language of theology or not, the problem remains the same : Gulliver gives another hint to it in the passage just quoted, when he speaks of the 'frequent Discourses with my Master concerning the Nature of Manhood'. The special faculty which distinguishes man from other animals, according to Locke and almost every thinker of the time, is Reason : "that is the key factor in 'the Nature of Manhood'. But we can hardly argue that to a Houyhnhnm. Confronted with the similarities between the real world as we know it and the microcosmic society to the Yahoos, we might come to the conclusion that the key to 'the Nature of Manhood'. is man's helpless tendency to foulness and evil—and this is the conclusion both Gulliver and the Houyhnhnms come to. Man, after all, is the most destructive animal which has ever populated the earth; the havoc he wreaks upon the land, the seas, the rivers, air, the plants, the other animals; the way he fouls and destroys his surroundings with methodical efficiency, exceeds anything that, say, the rat can do. We surely cannot resist this conclusion any more than we could resist the king of Brobdingnag's summary description of the little-worlders as odious vermin.

—*David Ward*

(37)

Contrasted Races

There are two curious things about this simplified scheme of antithesis. One is that the aesthetic and moral contrasts are presented as following from the differences in the rationality of the two races. The Houyhnhnms are good and beautiful because it is rational to be so. The Yahoos are bad and ugly because they totally lack reason. It follows that, in the scale of values which is created, nothing which is irrational, like special personal affection (as opposed to love for the race as a whole), or fear of death, or enthusiasm, or fancy, can be aesthetically pleasing or morally good.

The other curious thing is that, whereas the Yahoos possess all the Seven Deadly Sins of the Christian faith, and Houyhnhnms possess the four Cardinal Virtues of the Ancients, Prudence, Justice, Temperance and Fortitude, there is no place in the moral scheme provided for the three great Christian virtues—at least in the way that they are felt and seen and experienced by the Christian—Faith, Hope and Love.

—David Ward

(38)

The Houyhnhnms

The Houyhnhnms are neither pantomine horses nor real horses who can think : they haven't an ounce of horse in them. They are, even, far removed from the traditional stereotype idea of a horse which man has always sentimentally thought of as pure passion, easy flowing movement, unthinking strength and nobility, never, like a fox or monkey as mimic of man's capacity to reason. Except in their outward form, they are not a bit like horses, but they are admirable, morally; they are in their own way a perfect adaptation to the natural world; they are careful, calm, deliberate and intelligent in the way in which they organize their lives. In short they are an expression of something which we would all, in some moods and moments, wish to be; an expression of a human ideal, an ideal which was very much prized in Swift's day. There is no doubt that Swift shares the ideal they represent in some degree ; but though they represent a human ideal they do not represent a human fact, an aspect of the human in reality. Far from flattering humanity they are a calculated affront to man's proud image of himself.

—David Ward

(39)

The Royal Society

In the same way there was necessarily a great deal of incomprehension, even fear, at the strange activities of the Royal Society. The same Tory squires who exercised their tongues about the new methods of Tull over a bottle of port could doubtless be sardonic about cats in air pumps too. Nowadays we tend only to remember the activities of geniuses like Newton and Boyle, and the way in which they set the patterns of thought of modern science which were to dominate the intellectual life of the world for centuries. But members of the Royal Society sometimes did silly things, too, sometimes chased wild whims and delusions in the fashionable name of experimental science. Swift, like other reactionaries (I use the term neutrally, not as an adverse judgement) picked on the excess and the absurdities, but perhaps the real problem for him lay deeper. The new science seemed to be tainted with irreverence for the old truths, and even with irreligion. The members of the Royal Society excluded Thomas Hobbes from membership because

he was an atheist; they cultivated clerics like poor Thomas Sprat, their historian ; they indulged in bizarre attempts to prove experimentally the reality of the spirit and of ghosts, but try as they might the suspicion always remained that their experimental, analytical and inductive methods either challenged revealed religion or were going to do so before long. In fact, like Newton, most of the members of the Royal Society were deeply religious, but the conservative and traditionalist half-glimpsed the fact that they were going to change irrevocably the whole fabric of society, The truths of religion depend so intimately upon the believer's daily experience that any such radical change as the scientist prepared for was bound to seem counter to religion.

—*David Ward*

(40)

Self-Abasement

Gulliver's feelings in Houyhnhnmland—his "Horror and Detestation" when he catches sight of himself in a lake or fountain—are an intensification, therefore, of feelings that he has first experienced in Brobdingnag. Now Gulliver is taught by the Houyhnhnms to distrust the powers of human reason; his master comes to the conclusion that "instead of Reason, we were possessed only of some Quality fitted to increase our natural Vices"; and he likens this quality to a troubled stream that gives off distorted images of objects mirrored there—"as the Reflection from a troubled Stream returns the Image of an ill-shapen Body, not only larger, but more distorted" – a simile that Swift may owe to a familiar passage in the Novum Organum : "the human understanding is like a rough mirror, which mingles its own nature with the rays of what it reflects, distorting and discolouring the nature of things." Then the assault of the female Yahoo causes Gulliver to see himself as a "real Yahoo, in every Limb and Feature" — a conclusion that first seems unjustified. Might Gulliver not have concluded equally well that he was a monkey in every limb and feature after the parallel incident in Book II ? But there is a difference. Gulliver admits that he has stimulated the Yahoos to look on him as one of their species by frequently "stripping up my Sleeves, and showing my naked Arms and Breast in their Sight." His exhibitionism in this case is overtly sexual (there seems no other interpretation) ; and despite his humiliation, Gulliver apparently feels some reciprocal attraction to his Yahoo assailant ; he remarks that she "did not make an Appearance altogether so hideous as the rest of the Kind." Thus bereft of pride of mind and pride of body, Gulliver understandably prefers the sight of a common Yahoo to the sight of himself. When he returns home, however, his loneliness leads him eventually to look for ways of coming to terms with mankind, and he decides that he can no longer avoid the sight of what he is. He decides "to behold my Figure often in a Glass, and thus if possible habituate myself by Time to tolerate the Sight of a human Creature.'

—*W. B. Carnochan*

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Chronology of Important Dates

1667 November 30, Jonathan Swift born in Dublin.

1673 Joins Kilkenny School.

1682 Enters Trinity College, Dublin.

1686 Awarded B. A. *speciali gratia*.

1689 Joins his mother in England.

1689 Enters Sir William Temple's service at Moor Park.

1689 Becomes acquainted with Esther Johnson (Stella).

1690 Returns to Ireland.

1691 Back at Moor Park.

1691 Writes the 'Ode to the Athenian Society'.

1692 M. A. Oxford.

1694 Ordained in Ireland.

1695 Presented to the prebend of Kilroot, Ireland.

1696 Returns to Moor Park.

1699 Death of Temple.

1699 Swift travels to Ireland as chaplain to the Earl of Berkley.

1699 Begins his championship of the rights of the Church of Ireland.

1700 Vicar of Laracor, prebend of St. Patrick's, Dublin.

1701 Writes *A Discourse of the Contests and Dissensions between the Nobles and Commons in Athens and Rome.*

1702 Doctor of Divinity, Trinity College, Dublin.

1704 *A Tale of a Tub, The Battle of the Books* and *The Mechanical Operation of the Spirit,* published (written, probably 1697-98).

1707-9 In London ; friendship with Addison, Steele etc.

1707-9 Writes *Bickerstaff Papers.* Friendship with Esther Vanhomrigh (Vanessa).

1709 Writes "A Project for the Advancement of Religion."

1709 (June) Returns to Ireland.

1710 (September) Journey to London on a mission for the Church of Ireland.

1710 Edits *the Examiner.*

1710 Writes *Journal to Stella* (extending to 1713).

1711 *Miscellanies in Prose and Verse.*

1712 "Conduct of the Allies".

1713 (June) Installed as Dean of St. Patrick's Dublin.

1713 (September) Has become friend with Pope. *Scriblerus Club* founded.

1714 After the death of Queen Ann returns to Ireland.

1721 Works on *Gulliver's Travels.*

1723	(June) Death of Vanessa.
1724	"The Drapier Letters".
1726	Visit to London.
1726	*Gulliver's Travels* published.
1727	Visits England for the last time.
1728	Death of Stella.
1729	*A Modest Proposal.*
1731	Writes *Polite Conversation*, *Directions to Servants.*
1731	'Verses on the Death of Dr. Swift', etc.
1732	Writes several tracts on Irish affairs.
1735	*Collected Works*, in four volumes, published in Dublin.
1738	Fifth and Sixth volume of collected works published.
1742	Declared of unsound mind and memory.
1745	October 19, Swift died.

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